How To Save Thousands On a New House

Bluebook

25c
NOVEMBER

Reading time: 3 minutes to learn how to

- **cut engine wear up to 38%**
- **prevent loss of power, compression**
- **save 15%-25% on oil . . . without ever changing your oil filter**

This Gadget is Worth $320,000,000

...and I Discovered it by Accident!

by Albert Wells

IT ALL STARTED the day I got the bill: $214.36 for an engine overhaul—and I had only 28,000 miles on the car!

I told my troubles to a neighbor—a lubrication engineer—told him how I'd always changed oil every 1500 miles, changed filters every 5,000 miles. His answer floored me.

"You've been wasting your money," he said. "We've spent millions developing oil additives that keep carbon, gum and abrasives from damaging your engine. Your oil costs about 15¢ more a quart because of those additives. Yet oil filters on the market today are made of rag or paper—they soak up additives like a blotter. The more often you change oil filters the more money you waste!"

"But don't I need a filter to take the impurities out of the oil?" I asked.

He took a deep breath. "This will really shock you. Engine damage is done by abrasives 10 to 40 microns in size (a micron is .000039"). Your oil filter can't take them out because rags or paper can't be packed tight enough without stopping oil flow when the fibers soak up oil and expand."

"Isn't there any kind of filter that does the job it's supposed to do?"

"No, except for the porous bronze filters they're making for supersonic aircraft. And you can't buy a filter like that for your car."

I asked myself: "Why not?" Next day, I tracked down the outfit that was making the filters for aircraft, and got the answer. These porous bronze filters were made by fusing together millions of tiny bronze balls. Non-absorbent, they didn't remove additives, yet they removed abrasives in the 10-to-40 micron danger zone. Could they be made for automobiles? Again, the answer floored me.

LIFETIME FILTER TESTED IN CARS, TRUCKS, BOATS

Test models had already been used in cars and trucks for millions of miles, proving the porous bronze filter: 1. Never needs replacing. 2. Saves the quart of oil thrown away with ordinary filter packs. 3. Increases engine life.

Trouble was, almost the entire production was being absorbed by military and industrial users.

That day I went to work on the biggest job of my life: setting up production of the Lifetime porous bronze permanent filters for cars and trucks (an estimated $320,000,000 replacement industry).

HOW TO GET A LIFETIME FILTER FOR YOUR CAR

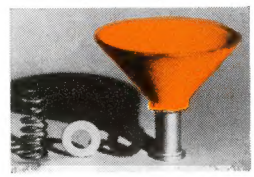
Try the Lifetime filter on your car for 2 weeks: if it isn't all I say, you get your money back; if you keep it, you're through buying filter packs—the Lifetime filter is guaranteed for 10 years, actually will last many times that long.

For complete unit, including case (fits any car), send make, year and model of your car and $12.95 (we pay shipping).

Conversion kit, which replaces your present filter pack with Life-Time bronze, is $6.95 for most cars (send make and number of present filter when ordering). Conversion kits for Buicks with hydraulic lifters and for cars with full flow systems: $13.95.

Or send only $2 deposit, pay C.O.D. charges on arrival. But do it today—don't waste another cent on filter pack replacements!

Complete Lifetime Filter; fits any car.



Lifetime Conversion Kit; replaces ordinary packs with permanent bronze element.

Permanent Filter Division, Dept. FBB-11
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Washington Blvd. at Motor Ave., Culver City, Calif.

Ship ☐ complete unit for_____
make, model, year of car

☐ conversion kit for_____
make and number of present filter

I enclose ☐ $12.95 for complete unit ($18.95—chrome)
☐ $6.95 for conversion kit (full-flow, $13.95)
☐ $2.00 deposit; send C.O.D.

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City_____ Zone____ State_____

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Bluebook

NOVEMBER, 1954 Vol. 100, No. 1

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POLITICS IS PEOPLE

By Robert Bendiner

IS IT TRUE that you can't get folks to go into politics any more because it's too rough and thankless a career?

The statistical department of this column, consisting of an International Business Abacus and the normal quota of fingers and toes, has been calculating the number of Americans seeking public office this year. The figures are almost as startling as they are unreliable.

To begin with, there are of course the 435 Congressional seats and the 37 or so Senate vacancies, including several extra ones caused by untimely deaths. For most of these offices there are two contenders in November, making a total of 944. But each of these, in turn, had rivals for their party's nomination earlier in the year—say one apiece. That doubles the figure again, bringing us to 1,888—just for Congress.

Then there appear to be 35 governorships on the auction block, each involving a pair of opponents—that's 70 more. As these things go, the chances are that the 35 challengers each had two rivals for the nomination, for another 70. So that's 140 tacked on to 1,888, making 2,028 so far.

Now, whenever you elect a governor, you also elect a drove of other state officials—lieutenant governors, treasurers, attorney-generals, and the-patron-saint-of-poll-watchers only knows what else. Let's say 20 officials in 35 states. That's 700, each with three rivals, including those who ran in the primaries, making another 2,800 in all. Total so far: 4,828.

I'm really sorry now that I got into this, because, statistically as well as politically, state legislatures are a bit of a mess. We'll say only half of the states elect new legislatures this year. These bodies vary from 52 in Delaware to 424 in New Hampshire, where it's a pretty poor farmer who doesn't occasionally take a crack at law-making. A nice average, and one that I can figure with, is 200. In 24 states, that's 4,800 seats, each with, say, four contenders, including primaries, or 19,200 in all. Total so far, 24,028.

At this point it occurs to me with horror that a lot of cities and towns also elect governments this year—maybe 2,000 out of the 7,000 or so in the country. Well, at 20 offices per town (including councilmen and dog-catchers) and two candidates per office, that's another 80,000 aspirants to spots on the public payroll. Total so far, 104,028.

I'd be surprised if this figure proved to be accurate, and even more surprised if it didn't turn out to be on the short side. So there you have it. Everybody says what a terrible thing it is to run for office—what a sacrifice, what a beating—and yet you see 104,000 men and women (give or take a few score thousand) voluntarily and happily pounding away at each other for the privilege.

It shows either that the Republic is still safe, with a vigorous, self-sacrificing citizenry, or that unemployment is still with us. Anyway, may the best multitude win.

ONE OF THE nicest things that can happen to a legislator, according to Representative Howard Smith, is a chance to vote twice on the same measure. It gives you a nice flexibility.

The Virginia Democrat tells of a hot contest in the Alexandria City Council many years ago, in which he backed one man for a job and his chief opponent backed another. Smith was pleased to notice that one doubtful councilman who had promised to vote for his man did so, but nevertheless the balloting resulted in a tie.

On the second time around, the doubtful councilman switched to the other side and Smith lost the battle. Before he could exact an explanation from the turncoat, that statesman was on his feet yelling with joy: "I did it. By George, I did it. I promised them both and I voted for them both."

Wind Over Washington

(from the Congressional Record)

SENATOR SPARKMAN (D.,Ala.) *hears the phrase "Yankee ingenuity" used by a Northern colleague and senses a missing adjective:* Let me state that is the first time I ever heard that word used by itself.

SENATOR BUSH (R.,Conn.): The Senator shows his complete lack af familiarity with New England, because Yankee ingenuity is something with which everyone in New England is familiar.

SENATOR SPARKMAN: But I was not paying any attention to the word "ingenuity."

* * *

SENATOR LANGER (R.,N.D.) *raises a timely issue:* Does the distinguished Senator from South Carolina know whether Great Britain ever paid us for the White House when they burned it down?

. . . . I was just trying to find out whether they ever paid us for burning down the Capitol.

* * *

REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN (R.,Mich.) *nobly yielding to another Congressman the honor of having his name attached to a bill for a new House restaurant, utters an historic saying:* My desire to be fed is greater than my desire to have my name attached to a resolution.

* * *

REP. ROOSEVELT (D., N.Y.) *makes public a bit of naval lore hitherto unsuspected:* Let me say to the gentleman that from my own personal experience in destroyers in the last war—and I had five years riding tin cans—that the first thing my enlisted men did when they hit the beach was to go for a glass of milk.

PRO and CON

Correction, Senator!

Concerning Senator Neely's remarks about seeing three pictures of the *liar* Ananias (Politics Is People, August):

Does Senator Neely imagine any devout artist wasting brush strokes on Ananias, husband of Sapphira, or Ananias, the high priest who smacked Paul? Let the senator refer to Acts 9:3-17.

I read BLUEBOOK for entertainment, the Bible for instruction in spiritual matters and remarks of senators for laughs.

William A. Bowie, *Maplewood, N. J.*

Yes, now that you mention it, the Ananias whose pictures the senator saw must have been not "the most celebrated liar of antiquity," but the Ananias of Acts 9:3-17—one of Christ's disciples.—ED.

Fast Driving

A slightly condensed version of "You Can Drive Fast and Live" (August) would be a very valuable addition to the instruction manual furnished with every new car.

After 40 years and 600,000 miles of driving, plus 20 years as a safety director and three years as fleet supervisor for 500 cars, I concur in every statement except the one on stopping distance. Not all roads are of good quality concrete by any means. In hot weather, blacktops frequently have soft spots. Excess dust on the road is still another factor. So I would say that the overall safe rule of thumb for figuring stopping distance in feet is to take the square of the speed in mph and divide it by 10.

The instructions for the "spin out" and "power slide" were so important they should have been in bold-faced type, since you're more likely to live through a roll-over than a head-on collision. In my youth I did a little dirt track racing and what I learned saved a child's life 20 years later.

Scene: a wide open Texas highway . . . not even a windmill within 10 miles . . . a light truck well off the pavement on the opposite side of the road . . . suddenly a child racing across the road from behind the parked truck.

I'm not sure exactly what I did except that it was wholly automatic. The car started into a spin and was practically at right angles to the road when, just before the rear fender would have hit the child,

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Address all letters to: The Editor, Bluebook Magazine, 230 Park Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.

I reversed and made an opposite spin on full throttle.

It's not speed that's killing off people. It's lack of knowledge and application of common sense.

D. E. Woods, *Corpus Christi, Tex.*

There is a considerable amount of good safety advice in the article, even though we might criticize it generally on the ground that there was an implication that fast driving was pretty "smart stuff."

We doubt the statement that in 1953 not a single fatal accident could be attributed to a car traveling in excess of 100 miles per hour.

Also, the increase in deaths from 1951 to 1953 was 3.6 per cent, not 36 per cent. Someone must have misplaced a decimal point.

David M. Baldwin, *Director Traffic Division, National Safety Council, Chicago, Ill.*

The authors apologize for the misplaced decimal point, but would like to see proof of any fatal accidents in 1953 that were caused by speeds of over 100 mph.—ED.

Junk, He Says

Just what in hell are you doing to BLUEBOOK? It used to be full of good, honest fiction. Now you have one or two good stories and a lot of junk.

Here's my opinion of your August issue:

"Is Your House Wired for Trouble?"—science magazines do it much better; "Baseball's Better Than Ever"—very good; "How to Turn Hot Ideas Into Cold Cash"—a waste of paper; "Put the Baby in a Packsack"—good article for a woman's magazine; "You Can Drive Fast and Live"—O.K.; "Touch-Tag at 300 mph"—all right; "Buffalo Bill's Decline and Fall"—Good.

As for your fiction, "The Hustlers," "Kanaya's Zero," "One for the Road," "The Ravisher" and "Storm" are very good, but there should be more. The novel, "The Iron Skipper," stinks.

Your features: "Politics Is People" is slightly humorous. "Medical Report," "Man Around the House," "Angler's Almanac" and "What Would You Do" don't belong in a fiction magazine.

Kenneth F. Brinkman, *Chicago, Ill.*

The score, by your own count: articles—4 good, 1 bad, 2 misplaced; fiction—5 good, 1 bad; features—1 good, 4 misplaced. The defense rests.—ED.

Discerning Reader

Congratulations to you and to author Verne Athanas. His novel, "The Iron Skipper,". (August) is the best adventure yarn I have read in many years.

D. J. Gordon, *New York City*

Home Delivery

Clark Hunter Bradford's "Having Babies Is a Cinch" reminds me of an experience of my own.

I'm a father of six. On five occasions I guessed my wife's confinement dates to a matter of hours. Once I erred.

The day of December 20, 1941 brought subzero weather and drifting snow that closed the highway. My wife had acted normally all day, but shortly before 8 P.M. she was seized with a violent cramp.

I phoned the road commissioner, and he promised to have the road cleared in three hours. My wife's contractions were now more violent and closer together. So I called the head of the maternity department at the hospital and was briefed on obstetrics.

I put on a pair of rubber gloves that I used to skin rabbits and scrubbed up with soap and Lysol. Then I gently massaged my wife's tummy per instructions.

The baby's head was easily felt to the left of the uterine orifice. I worked it toward the center of the abdomen. There was an instant contraction. Seconds later a tiny head appeared. I hooked my fingers under the jaw bone and at each succeeding contraction gave a gentle tug. It was all over in less than a minute and in exactly 31 minutes after the first warning.

John H. Laurie, *East Peoria, Ill.*

Unfit to Read?

Your July novel ("Sorry—Your Party Doesn't Answer") is just plain rotten. It's full of profanity, obscenity and words and scenes that aren't fit for young people to read.

W. M. Huff, *Claflin, Kan.*

I am only 16, but have read every story, article and book-length novel since 1949. I have felt that none was too "dirty" for me to read.

William Haviland, *Charlottesville, Va.*

...AND YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT 'EM

"You heard me, lady—no double parking!"

Editor's Note:

Letter came in the other day from H. G. Kemper about the article on auto insurance in the June issue. Mr. Kemper, who is president of the Lumberman's Mutual Casualty Company and boss of a flock of other insurance companies known as the Kemper Group, said some nice things about the article—which was refreshing since so many letters beat our brains out—and wound up with a suggestion:

He thinks we ought to get Sidney Margolius, who did the June piece, to write another article on just why auto insurance costs as much as it does. "There isn't the slightest question but what the present automobile insurance cost can be cut in two . . ." wrote Mr. Kemper. And one of the things that would help do it, he said, was the proper licensing of drivers.

Well, when Sid Margolius finds a hole in his working schedule he's promised to go over the situation with Mr. Kemper and maybe another article will result. Meanwhile, to show you the way people's minds sometimes run in parallel lines, look at the piece by Lester David on page 58.

Lester, whose name you've seen often in these pages of late, came in one day last spring and told us some of the sensational facts you'll find in the article. We told him to go ahead and dig into it; "Licensed to Kill" is the result.

That sort of digging is not new to Lester. After he got out of college he went to work on *The Brooklyn Eagle* as a reporter on the night side—covering police, courts, D.A. and so forth and exposing everything from lack of screens in a veteran's housing project to conditions in the local jail. Got himself locked up in the pokey for the last one and nearly spent the rest of his life there.

Seems while Lester was incarcerated, a guard picked up a con who had a nasty shiv which he was sharpening up for a spot between our Mr. David's ribs. The man guessed Lester wasn't a real con, suspected he was a stool pigeon and was all set to eliminate same. Fortunately the guard got him first.

During the war, Pfc. David was managing editor of *Stars and Stripes,* Paris edition. One time he sent a captain over to London to cover a story. A nearby general thought someone of higher rank should have been sent instead. He called up and said so. Lester told him to relax, it was okay. "Who are you?" demanded the general. "This is the managing editor," Lester said.

"Your name, Sir!" the general roared.

"Private David!"

David, however, survived and came home to marry the reporter who used to sit three desks away. Now there's also Margery Ellen, who is redheaded and much cuter than her old man.

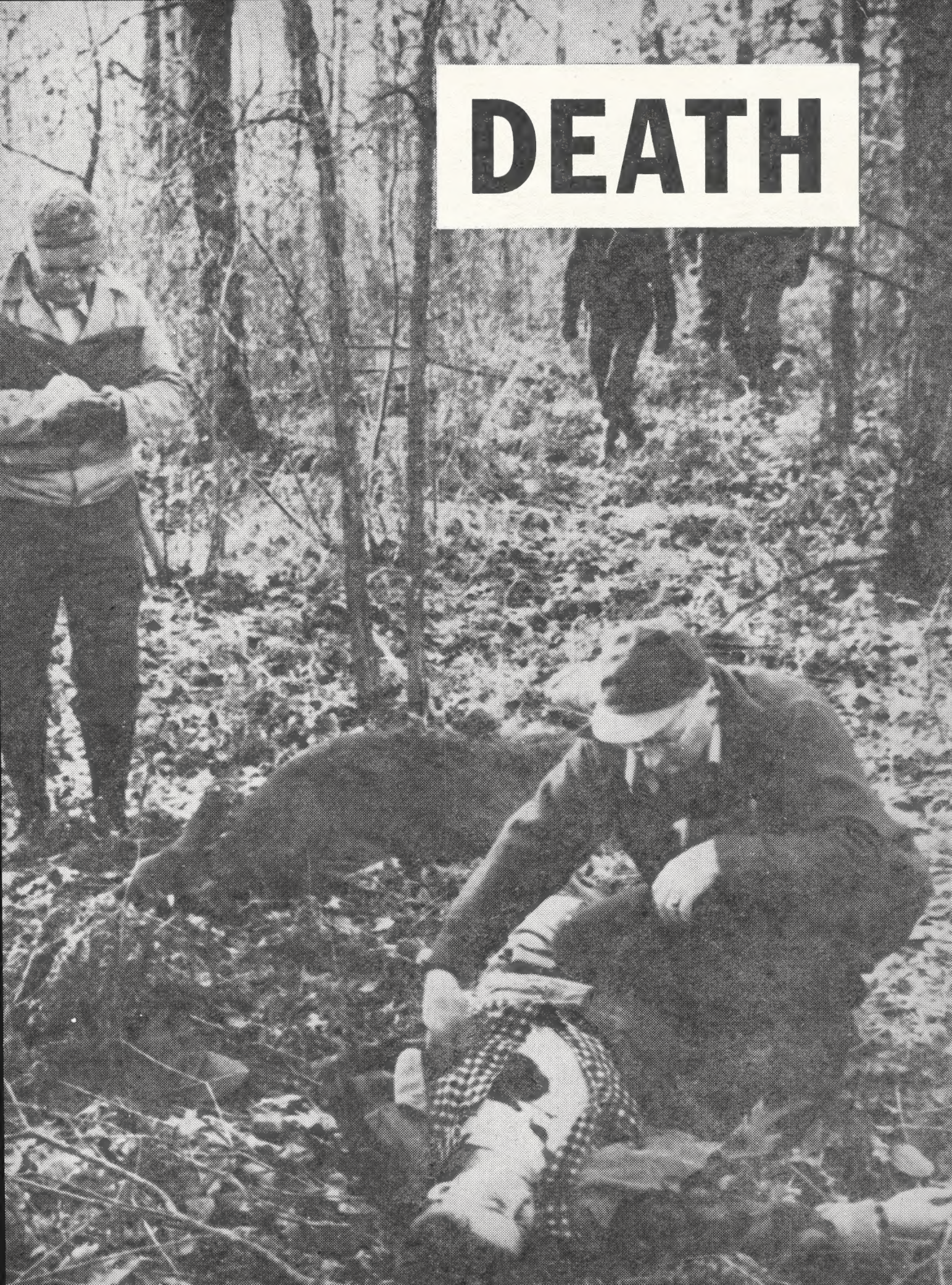
Margery Ellen David and assistant.

Lindsay Hardy, this month's novelist, has barrelled all over the globe, even though he's only had one job—writing. The author of "The Faceless Ones"—as tense a novel as we've read in many a day—is an Australian who wrote for radio down under from 1947 to 1952, when he came to Hollywood for a short glimpse. He stayed to write a movie, some TV scripts and a couple of novels, including this one. At present he's in Toronto, working on his third, and when he learns to write dialogue "that sounds reasonably like the speech of Americans" he may return to Sydney, set up his typewriter on the beach and spend the rest of his life at ease.

Except no writer we ever knew had a life of ease.

We didn't intend to leave this one till last because "The Way It Ought To Be," on page 24, is one we urge you most urgently to read. No hunting story we've ever seen points up the dignity and grandeur of the sport the way this one does. Maybe we're overboard, but we think anyone who's ever stalked anything from a woodchuck up, will see in this the articulation of what you felt and strove for but could not put into words.

Hugh Fosburgh, who wrote it, is the young author of two novels, "View From the Air" and "The Hunter." When we asked him for some lines about himself, he was remarkably sparse. He was graduated from Yale, he wrote, worked for *Fortune* and *Life* as a writer, served three years as a bomber pilot and since then has devoted his time to writing and logging.—*A.F.*


DEATH

WEARS A RED CAP

BY EVERETT E. TUCKER
Chief, Enforcement Section, Michigan Conservation Department
With AL SPIERS

More than a thousand human beings will be killed and mutilated in the woods this fall, shot by senseless hunters.

As THE 1951 deer season waned, five men in a travel-stained sedan prowled the back roads of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Road hunting isn't legal, but these five men had seen no bucks in the woods. Their time was running out. Now, like too many others, they had a bad case of trigger fever and were in a get-'em-any-way mood.

It was nearly 6 P.M. Dusk was thickened by tall trees that lined the road. A full 700 feet ahead of the car something moved in the shadows.

"A buck!" cried one of the men.

The car lurched. The three men in front piled out and fumbled shells into their heavy rifles, peering intently into the gloom. There was another blur of shadowy movement.

"There's two! Let 'em have it."

The trio got off seven nervous shots. Their aim was good. Both "deer" were down—only one was a 13-year-old boy, his left arm hideously shattered, a gaping wound in his chest. The other was his five-year-old brother, both legs broken by a single .30-caliber slug.

The two lads, who lived nearby, had been playing along the road.

Luckily, doctors saved both their lives, the older boy's arm and the tyke's legs. It was a ghastly accident, but I've encountered worse in 21 years as a Michigan conservation officer.

Last year, 468,000 hunters—a vast army—surged into Michigan's north country in November. In a shade over two weeks, they killed 97,300 deer.

Their bullets also killed 13 human beings and wounded 61 others.

A bad year? Not at all. In the past five years, Michigan deer hunters have killed 75, wounded 297—an average of 15 deaths and 59 woundings a year. Last year was about par: two less deaths, two more injuries.

In the 24 years we've recorded since 1929, Michigan deer hunters have accidentally shot more than 1,000 persons—killing 265, wounding 764.

I spent more than 10 seasons as a conservation officer in deer country, investigating much of this senseless slaughter firsthand. For the past eight years, as chief conservation officer, I've studied the detailed reports our field men make of gun injuries.

Horror in the Fog

Statistics are cold and dull. Perhaps if I translate a few of ours into the shocking, heartbreaking human tragedies they represent, our woods will become a little safer:

The opening day of deer season dawned damp and foggy. Visibility was dangerously bad. But a father had promised his teen-age son a first taste of deer hunting. So they went into the woods.

The father was a fine woodsman. He knew the country. The boy had fished, trapped and often hunted smaller game with his dad.

This day he would graduate to big game. He would kill a buck!

They reached the boy's stand. The father, knowing the virulent fever that infects deer hunters, carefully briefed his tense, excited son.

"Stay here," he said. "Don't move. I'll circle around and try to drive a buck toward you. But remember: the fog is bad. I'll be somewhere out there—so don't shoot unless you are absolutely sure your target is a deer."

The boy nodded gravely, and the father left.

Well as he knew the country, the father somehow became confused in the fog. He was positive he was far from his son's stand when something stirred in the murk.

His quick snap shot struck his son in the heart. The boy died instantly. And I suspect part of the father died, too.

These roles were reversed in a tragic incident last year. A young man, hunting in Gladwin County, fired at a running buck. His father was out of sight and apparently safe below the level of a nearby ridge.

But the slug caromed off a hardwood tree, hit the father in the eye and killed him instantly.

Unusual? Not at all. We had an identical tragedy in Houghton County in 1951. A young man spied a buck and snapped off a shot. Again, his father was out of sight, out of the line of fire. Again, the slug ricocheted off a tree.

The only difference was that this slug hit the father in the stomach, and he died eight days later of peritonitis.

Last year, two brothers hunted in Missaukee County.

"You stand and I'll drive," said the younger brother. "Stay put. Don't move."

But the man who was posted did move—and his brother drilled him through the legs, opening an artery. He bled to death before they could get medical aid.

Almost exactly the same thing happened in Menominee County in 1952. This time, the shooter got his brother to the hospital, but the wounded man died in two hours, his guts shredded by a high-velocity bullet.

The day before, in Schoolcraft County, a boy had slipped as he fired at a buck. The bullet hit his mother in the back. Fortunately, she suffered only a flesh wound.

It must be a terrible thing for a father to accidentally kill a son, or a son to kill his father, or brother to kill brother.

Yet, I sometimes wonder, remembering one woman I encountered a few years ago. In Michigan, any hunter who shoots himself or someone else is denied a license for five years.

During the bird season, this woman accidentally killed her 15-year-old son.

Less than 30 days later, she came storming into our headquarters at Lansing, demanding to know why she couldn't get a deer license.

Nothing would pacify her. She left, still outraged. I was tempted to ask if she had other expendable sons.

On rare occasions, that five-year revocation law—which permits no exceptions—unfairly penalizes blameless hunters.

Consider, for example, the bubbleheads who go into the woods almost begging to be shot. I'll never forget the dim-wit who thought he could decoy deer. He cloaked himself with a deer head and hide, liberally anointed with doe scent, and went into the brush.

Luckily, the first hunter who spotted this crazy apparition was a poor shot. He missed three times before Mr. Lamebrain rolled out and started hollering like hell.

Do Killers Repeat?

An equally addled hunter mounted a stuffed deer head on the front of his car, nosed it into a clump of brush and took a stand nearby.

Two other hunters came along and put nine high-powered slugs through his radiator.

Another guy threw a bearskin robe over his cold car hood—and had his engine ruined by no less than 10 rifle bullets.

Although a few hunters may suffer unjustly, I'm convinced that our revocation law is good. Certainly it contributes toward something that to me is both remarkable and significant. In 24 years, we have compiled data on 614 fatal and 2,585 non-fatal hunting gunshot accidents.

In that whole voluminous file, I can't find a single repeater. To our knowledge—and we make it our business to record every firearms mishap—no Michigan hunter has shot himself or another more than once.

I find special significance in this surprising fact—a partial answer to those who ask:

"Why don't you screen licenses more carefully? Why don't you keep trigger-happy idiots and imbeciles out of the woods?"

Such questions as these are based, I suspect, on the belief that certain hunters are accident-prone, like certain automobile drivers.

We know that 25 per cent of the car drivers cause more than 75 per cent of the crashes. Statistics prove it.

Other statistics indicate that certain individuals are accident-prone at work or at home.

No such conclusive clue appears in our hunting-accident statistics. In fact, the opposite is indicated.

make it easy

YOU CAN make a compact waterproof match case from a couple of empty shotgun shells—a 12-gauge and a 16-gauge, or a 16-gauge and a 20-gauge. Simply place matches in smaller shell and slip the larger shell over it. I found that this case kept my matches dry even when submerged in water.

—Harlon E. Hicks, Calhoun, Ky.

In recent years, we have made supplementary studies in selected cases, searching for the cause of the slaughter in our woods. We have probed deeply into the lives, habits, backgrounds, emotions, work and driving records of scores of hunters who killed or maimed afield.

Rarely have we found one who is accident-prone. Nearly all are physically fit, emotionally stable, morally sound.

These studies have shown the average casualty-causer to be otherwise steady, careful, dependable.

How, then, can we hope to spot such men in advance and deny them a license?

I have gone over our records and data with top-flight psychiatrists and asked that same question. No one has suggested an answer. I don't think there is one.

Nor has anyone suggested how to cure a peculiar hypnotic malady which I'm convinced causes most of our ugly woods tragedies.

I call it trigger fever. It's a mental mesmerism exactly the opposite of buck fever, which freezes the hunter who sees a buck.

Trigger fever is a curious disease of the mind, compounded of strange environment, male ego, suspense, excitement and the latent urge to kill.

Let's examine these ingredients.

Most deer hunters—in Michigan, at least—come from farms, factories and fancy offices. To them, the wilderness is a strange element that provokes vague fears and anxieties—usually faint, but sometimes strong.

The Hypnotic Spell

The male ego is a big factor. Last year, 468,000 Michigan hunters killed 97,300 deer. A little figuring will show that only one hunter out of five (or 4.8 to be exact) got a buck. In such competition, the man who gets a deer has reason to feel proud, to brag and lord it over his empty-handed pals.

Now mix in taut suspense. Deer hunting is slow, infinitely patient sport—brought to a swift, split-second climax. Usually, the hunter stalks or sits for days to get a single chance that may be gone in an instant. Even among veteran hunters this kind of suspense can be consuming.

Excitement is partly a by-product of this suspense, partly the old thrill of the hunt.

And buried deep in most male minds is that primeval urge to kill.

Exposed to these virulent forces, few men can avoid trigger fever in some degree. Tenderfeet are hardest hit, but veteran woodsmen succumb, too, and fall into a strange, hypnotic spell.

The symptoms are easily recognized. The eyes, ears and nose play tricks. An intoxicating fog swirls in the brain.

And blood is soon shed.

I'll never forget the poor oldtimer whose trigger fever led to a bear fixation. He killed a buck early in the season.

"Now," he said, "I'm going to get a bear!"

After days of fruitless stalking, he found fresh bear signs in a berry patch. It was too late in the day to track, so he came back the next dawn and worked stealthily toward the berry patch.

From 100 yards away he spotted faint movement. He froze, watching, waiting, scarcely breathing. Gradually, his straining eyes made out the form of a big black bear lurking near the base of a tree.

He had no binoculars, so he peered through his rifle 'scope.

"It *is* a bear," his eyes told him.

He aimed carefully . . . fired. There was no more movement.

He ran forward, happy and excited. Not until he was a few feet away did the true facts penetrate his feverish mind. His bear wasn't black. It was clothed in red wool—made redder now by gushing blood. He had killed a man.

The poor old fellow was taken to jail. I'll never forget him. I paused near his cell that evening. He sat on the edge of his cot, wringing his

hands and mumbling something. I moved closer to hear. Over and over he was saying:

"It was a bear . . . I know it was a bear . . . it was a bear . . ."

Before he could be tried he lost his mind.

Two years ago, in Montmorency County, a 17-year-old high-school boy scrambled up a steep ridge on his hands and knees. He, too, was mistaken for a bear and slain.

The careless killer in this case ran afoul of a stern judge who gave him 18 months to 15 years in prison, saying: "There is absolutely no excuse for one man to shoot another in the woods."

There isn't, really—yet it goes on and on. Some cases are incredible.

The Most Puzzling Accidents

Who, for example, could mistake a car for a deer?

One opening day, an Upper Peninsula native drove to a favored spot before dawn. He parked partly in the brush and curled up on the seat to nap until it got light.

Presently, a car rounded a curve 100 yards away. Apparently, its lights bounced an odd reflection off the native's brush-screened car.

Three men leaped out and started blasting. The dozing native woke in a hurry, got a door open, wriggled out and crawled under his car without being hit.

Nine bullets went through his car—one where his head would have been had he been sitting at the wheel instead of curled up on the seat.

The most puzzling and inexcusable accidents are those which occur in plain view.

Two years ago, one man killed a buck and was dragging it out when he was shot in the shoulder by an unknown hunter.

"I'll never know why he shot me," the injured man told us. "I was only 25 yards from him, in plain view. I was sure he saw me . . ."

The same thing happened on opening day last year near Newaygo. A hunter had been brought to a hospital with a leg so shattered it had to be amputated.

"I was walking and ran across a stranger," he said. "He was only 20 yards away. I was sure he could recognize me, so I didn't speak up. He fired three times. When he hit me, I shouted for help—but he ran away . . ."

The very next day, a hunter in Iosco County nearly walked into three shots that whined close to his head. He hit the ground fast and shouted. No one answered, so he arose cautiously. *Wham!* A slug struck him low in the back.

Luckily, he was able to reach medical aid. On his own—because whoever shot him ran away.

Those who wound and flee are the worst vermin in the woods. There are many, and often their skulking away leaves a man to die.

Last December 1, Russell Mericle, 29, of Avoca, killed a deer and hung it. He was gutting it when a slug went through his leg.

"Help me!" he must have cried as he saw blood spurt from a cut artery. But apparently no one answered. So Mericle tried to help himself. He fashioned a crude tourniquet, but he couldn't keep it tight. His life, which could easily have been saved, flowed away. He was found hours later—and the whole story could be read plainly in the mute, tragic scene.

On November 28, 1952, near Rose City, hunters found Franklin Hinman, 21-year-old farmer, dead in the woods. It was the same story. He'd been shot in the leg—and left to bleed to death.

A few days earlier, others had found Gordon Payne, 32, sitting with his back against a tree in Ogemaw County, a cigarette between his fingers.

But the cigarette was dead—and so was Payne, of a rifle wound through the heart.

Every year men are found dead in the woods, slain by unknown rats who sneak away. Three cases last season were doubly tragic. In all three instances, the dead men were found by their sons.

What a terrible thing it must be for a boy to find his dad mysteriously dead in the woods!

Or to have something like this happen: Two Muskegon brothers sat in their tent last year, fixing lunch. A single shot rang out.

One brother grabbed his gun and jumped up, hoping to glimpse a running buck.

"Get your gun," he shouted to his brother. "Maybe we'll get a shot."

The brother didn't answer. He couldn't. The single shot had gone through the tent and his head. He was dead.

In this case, the hunter had shot at a running buck, unaware that the tent—obscured by brush—was in his line of fire.

In the Line of Fire

Line-of-fire and stray-bullet accidents are, by far, our most frequent. Last year, they accounted for 24 of the 74 humans shot during Michigan's deer season.

One reason is that too few hunters appreciate the terrific velocity of big-game rifles and ammunition.

I know of two cases where hunters scored clean "doubles," killing a deer and a man in the line of fire with the same shot. Many other hunters have been wounded by slugs that already have gone through a deer.

Near Cheboygan last year, one hunter stood leaning against a tree eight inches thick. Another, coming up behind, saw his arms move, mistook some branches for antlers and let fly.

The high-velocity bullet went through the tree and emerged with enough force to cut an ugly furrow across the leaning hunter's back.

In deer country, it isn't only the hunter that gets shot. In Oceana County last year, a farmer

He Rode Roughshod

A very young Steve Owen, now coach of the New York football Giants, was riding his horse down a dusty road in Oklahoma one day many years ago. A youth who had never seen a football game, he was dumbfounded by the activity he saw in an open field near a small-town high school. Boys in padded pants, leather head coverings and with peculiar rubber covers on their noses, were running in all directions, then suddenly piling on top of each other.

Dismounting and walking over to watch, Steve asked a man—who, incidentally, happened to be the coach—"What are them guys doin'?"

The coach, with a twinkling eye that took in the sturdiness of the youth before him, replied:

"Football. Like to try it?"

After a moment's hesitation, Steve allowed as to how he would.

"That fellow behind the boy in the middle is the quarterback," explained the coach. "He'll hand you the ball and you're supposed to run with it to that goal at the other end of the field."

The squad was alerted for the fun by the winks of the coach. Steve got behind the quarterback in the fullback's position. Upon being handed the ball, he lowered his head, dove for the center of the line, walked over a pile of prostrate bodies, then broke into a run for the goal, which he reached without suffering any physical violence.

"How'd I do?" he asked.

Barely concealing his astonishment, the coach studied Steve's 180-pound physique and, with a start, the boots he was wearing.

"All right," he admitted, "but before you start next time, son, take off your spurs."

—By Frank C. True

who lived in the woods heard shooting nearby. He opened a window and looked out—just in time to have a bullet graze his cheek and clip his ear.

A lost hunter climbed a tree to get his bearings, and was mistaken for a bear. The shot missed him, but hit and cracked the limb on which he stood. He fell and broke a leg.

Two hunters walked together through the woods, guns shouldered. Someone thought that the gun barrels were antlers. *Wham*—a shattered shoulder.

The one kind of victim I can write off without pain is the practical joker who asks for it. We had a perfect example recently.

A bunch of wise oldtimers brought a tenderfoot to their deer camp, and promptly fed him terrifying stories about man-eating wildcats and ferocious bears.

"Never go anywhere in the woods without a gun," they told him.

That night, before turning in, the nervous tenderfoot started the journey from cabin to privy.

"Hey," cried one joker. "Don't go out there without a gun. Here—take this." He handed the scared tenderfoot a .22 automatic after slyly extracting the clip.

They gave the tenderfoot time to reach the little outhouse. Then the joker sneaked out, thrashed in the brush near the privy and made with some blood-curdling growls.

But though he had removed the clip from the automatic, he had forgotten the shell in the barrel. It was delivered forthwith into his right shoulder. The wound wasn't serious, but he could have been killed. He certainly asked for it.

Hunting and horseplay simply don't mix any more than hunting and alcohol.

As you read this, about 75 hunters are eagerly planning to shoot a deer during Michigan's 1954 season—never dreaming that they, themselves, will be shot instead.

Unless a miracle occurs, that will be our toll this year: about 15 killed and 60 wounded. Throughout the country, past statistics say 200 will die and 1,000 will be wounded in hunting mishaps.

Are there no ways to halt or lessen this terrible, useless bloodletting?

Frankly, I don't think it can ever be wholly stopped—anymore than highway carnage can be

stopped. We can't hope to turn almost a half-million heavily-armed human beings loose in about 25,000 square miles of deer country without suffering some accidents.

But a few things might reduce the grim toll.

We should, I believe, deal more severely with those whose neglect has been gross or culpable. Society seems to view the hunter who kills like the car driver who kills. Too many say:

"That's bad—but it could happen to anybody. Let's not be harsh."

Consequently, it's hard to get tough prosecution or stiff sentences in even the most aggravated cases.

I'd like to see a board of experts—say a prosecutor, a police officer and a conservation officer—review every hunting accident to determine whether the degree of neglect warrants prosecution, somewhat like a grand jury weighs evidence of other crimes.

Where there is neglect or culpability, prosecution and trial should be mandatory and the penalties severe.

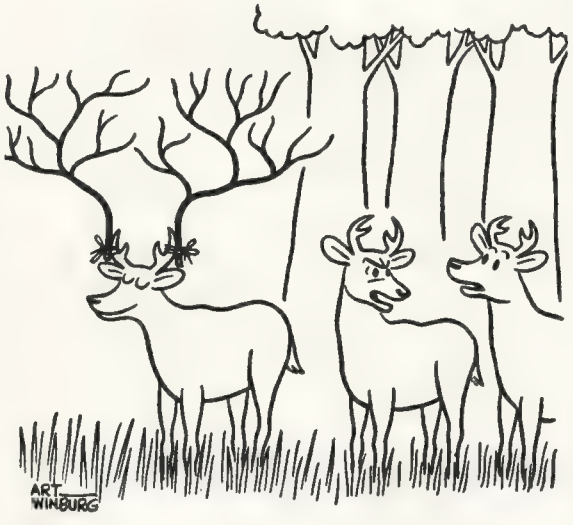
In Michigan, our conservation officers help state police make a careful investigation of all hunting casualties. There's some degree of neglect or carelessness in 90 per cent of the cases. Yet less than 10 per cent wind up in court.

One reason is that Michigan law requires a complaining witness in anything less than a murder case. Too often, the complaining witness is either dead or is the forgiving friend of the man who shot him. Society's lenient attitude is, of course, the biggest factor.

Tougher, more widespread enforcement of laws governing safe use of firearms might also reduce the toll. It would help to penalize carelessness or neglect *before* it kills or injures someone. We try to do that by shifting extra conservation officers into deer country each season.

But to do an effective job, we'd need twice our present manpower, and there's little prospect that the taxpayers will give us that.

The only real solution to this grim problem lies in the hands—and trigger finger!—of the hunter himself.



"Humph, they're just dead tree branches."

Where the Solution Lies

In 1950, Michigan initiated a multi-state conference on firearms safety. Experts in many fields discussed this urgent problem for two days. Similar conferences have since been held annually.

From these conferences have come many good ideas. We have developed uniform casualty reports which the National Rifle Association collects and analyzes. We have improved enforcement and broadened education in the safe handling of firearms, especially among the young. We have embarked on new studies that promise to unearth new approaches.

Yet all the experts agreed long ago that we who license, supervise or police can never hope to do more than nibble at the fringes of the problem.

No matter how you analyze it, the real job of stopping this awful slaughter lies with the hunter. He must recognize the symptoms of trigger fever and be wary. He must police his own derelictions. He must be stern, tough and unyielding with himself.

W. B. Babcock, a retired Michigan state police captain and an old friend of mine, has a small deer camp near Vanderbilt. Each year, many friends come to hunt with Bab. He's a veteran woodsman who loves the outdoors and a warm, genial, easy-going host—until it comes to gun handling.

Then he's a tyrant who won't tolerate the slightest error.

Bab imposes stiff fines to enforce his rigorous rules. If a man brings a loaded gun into a cabin, he is promptly assessed $10. Pointing a gun—loaded or unloaded—at anyone costs $5. If a hunter shoots a doe or fawn instead of a buck, he's charged $50.

"If a guy is that trigger happy, he's liable to shoot a man instead of a deer," says Bab.

During the hunt, every man in Bab's camp knows where every other man is posted, or where he'll be stalking, and woe to he who fires in a hazardous direction, deer or no deer.

Bab doesn't keep these fines. They go into a camp fund and pay for improvements, parties or extra food. Bab isn't interested in the money. He simply likes his friends—and wants none to go home in a coffin.

Unfortunately, Bab is the exception, not the rule. So each November we know that the slaughter of humans will begin the dawn of opening day and that death will stalk our woods, wearing a red hat!

—By Everett E. Tucker

The Remarkable Stubby McBain

BY HOLLISTER NOBLE

He wasn't exactly a ball of fire. But he knew what he wanted—a job as dispatcher and a girl named Kate.

SOME PLAYFUL DRAFTSMAN with a sense of humor must have traced the basic design of Stubby MacBain on his board in an inspired moment and then presented his suggestion to Stubby's parents for subsequent action. Stubby's physique, from infancy, was an amazingly symmetrical structure of straight lines and solid cubic forms.

His level brows; straight mouth under a small straight nose; flat cheeks; square shoulders; muscular arms hanging straight at his sides; short, stubby legs (hence his nickname); small, piercing brown eyes; and short straight spikes of coarse red hair, rising like a miniature picket fence above a flat square forehead—all this went to make an amusing, unusual and striking appearance.

Stubby's temperament seemed to blend harmoniously with these physical traits. There was no vacillation, no indecision whatever in his mental processes. He was a most cheerful, self-possessed, ingratiating baby. He was neat, orderly, calm and polite, and he knew just what toys he wanted and how to get them. His parents were always a little in awe of Stubby.

Stubby's father, Will MacBain, was car foreman on the Central Midland, which ran north and south between Minneapolis and Fort Worth. Stubby's play-pen, when he was small, occupied a corner of a sloping green yard overlooking the main line of the Central Midland and its busy Kirby yards in the rolling farmland of Iowa. By the time he was six Stubby knew the C.M.'s train schedules and most of its operating personnel in the Kirby area, and he learned from his father that

Illustrated by HERB MOTT

all the humming trains that so fascinated him were controlled by one man—a train dispatcher.

Stubby at once decided to be a train dispatcher. On no occasion, so far as is known, did he ever dream of being anything else. On his 10th birthday Stubby informed his father that he wished to go to work for the Central Midland at once. With difficulty Stubby's parents persuaded him to pursue his school studies a little longer. At 14 Stubby had attained his full height of five feet, two inches. He seemed almost as broad as he was high, passed for 18, and hardened his impressive physique at school by playing football and baseball. He also won a medium-weight boxing meet.

But on a warm November afternoon—he was just 15—Stubby displayed the only open break in a remarkably even temper that anyone had witnessed for years. He rose to his feet, slammed down on his desk a worn algebra book studded with his own pen and pencil sketches of C.M. rolling stock, and walked, scowling, out of the room past a surprised and protesting teacher. Stubby made his way at once to his father's office, midway between the roundhouse and car shops.

"Is Mr. MacBain in?" he asked an astonished clerk seated a few feet from his father. Will MacBain turned in his chair and caught the gleam in Stubby's eyes.

Rising to the occasion, he said courteously, "I'm Mr. MacBain. What can I do for you?"

"I wish to work for the Central Midland, sir," said Stubby firmly but politely.

"How old are you?" asked the senior MacBain, gazing at a point just above Stubby's spiked hair.

"Eighteen," said Stubby mildly. Mr. MacBain coughed.

"What kind of work do you wish?"

"I aim to be a train dispatcher, sir."

"Um—I see. Live around here?"

"At 21 Fort Street. I was born there," replied Stubby.

Mr. MacBain coughed again, glanced at his work sheets, then picked up an official form and handed it to Stubby.

"If you will fill that out, young man, you can report at the car shop tomorrow morning at five, as an apprentice car repairer. If your services are satisfactory you will be eligible for promotion in six months. Leave the form with the clerk. Good afternoon."

THREE years later—an official 21 on the C.M. roster and actually 18—Stubby, to everyone's surprise but his own, was chief car inspector and also had charge of a wrecking outfit that looked after crippled rolling stock on the division. To the eternal envy of his young friends Stubby also carried in his pocket an annual pass good on any C.M. train.

Even the road's oldtimers, after a bit of head-shaking over Stubby's small sum of years, were duly impressed by his obvious organizing ability and his remarkable mechanical aptitude. The walls of Stubby's bedroom were literally covered with blueprints, diagrams, drawings and charts of cars, brake valves, running gear and all classes of C.M. motive power, which Stubby studied continually. The youngster was already a Morse expert. A dummy Morse sender was nailed to the desk beside his bed and clattered away for an hour or two every morning before Stubby went to work. Beside the key rested a dog-eared copy of *Rights of Trains.* In addition to his regular duties Stubby also managed to attend a C.M. dispatcher school, looking forward to his first exams a few months in the offing.

Stubby had many friends. He had one enemy, not too formidable to be sure, but definitely a nuisance. This was Jim Barr, the DS or dispatcher at Ashley, 40 miles north of Kirby. Barr was a rather jaundiced, cantankerous individual due for retirement shortly. In Barr's eyes, and on Barr's sacred premises, Stubby had committed an unforgiveable crime.

Barr had always resented the calm air of authority possessed by this youngster, 40 years his junior. One afternoon at Ashley, when Barr had stepped out a moment for coffee, Stubby stepped in and used Barr's Morse bug to report a derailed switcher that had just fouled the main. It was a minor but real emergency and the use of Barr's key, with its owner absent, was to Stubby a minute but necessary transgression.

Dissatisfied with the instrument, Stubby altered the adjustment of the points and completed his message just as Barr returned. Mayhem and murder were barely averted. For such a neophyte as Stubby to alter a train dispatcher's delicate adjustment of his own Morse bug made murder a minor offense in Barr's eyes. Barr forbade Stubby to enter the premises again. Then he made a mistake. He cursed Stubby for 30 seconds in searing unprintable terms.

"After you retire, I aim to have your job, Mr.

make it easy

I HAVE found many times that in repairing boats or other wooden items using wood screws, that the screw will be stripped and will not tighten. Instead of replacing it with a larger size screw—which often is not at hand—I take out the screw and place a length of solder in the hole, then replace the old screw and tighten. Try it!

—R. L. Kennedy, Sarasota, Fla.

Barr," Stubby calmly informed the apoplectic DS. Then he quietly departed.

THREE months went by. Then, to the surprise of the community and with the quiet tenacity that distinguished him, Stubby began a steady, consistent, carefully planned courtship of Kate Arnold, a very pretty spirited girl of 18 and the catch of the town. Kate seemed mildly amused and, at first, not at all impressed by Stubby's stubborn attentions.

Long before any official announcement of the event, Stubby learned the date of the high school prom, to which he desperately desired to escort Kate. There were difficulties, for Kate had three determined suitors in addition to a minor parade of lesser fry.

Stubby at once hired one of his three rivals and quickly managed to get him transferred to Ashley for the summer. That left two to go. One of these boys also worked for the railroad. Plotting feverishly, Stubby won an important promotion for him—and a permanent transfer to a county seat 100 miles away. The third victim, Fred Banning, a debonair, good-looking lad, was bought off by outright bribery.

Fred had a fatal weakness. He was a fanatical rail fan. Stubby later revealed he paid Fred off with a 30-day pass on the Midland, two autographed books on steam locomotives in America; and a generous allotment of Stubby's HO model railroad stock. This was a colossal price to pay—but it won victory for Stubby.

Kate, after puzzling and wondering over the absence of invitations from her faithful three musketeers—she never did solve the silence of Fred—in desperation surrendered to Stubby's barrage of pleas and announced to her astonished family that Stubby would escort her to the high-school prom.

Social circles in Kirby were stunned.

Stubby prepared sartorially for the prom hours in advance. He had just encased himself in a new blue serge suit of the consistency of armor plate late in the afternoon when he got an emergency call from the shops. An express car containing valuable consignments had been set off on the siding opposite Ashley Station with a damaged truck. The cripple had to be repaired at once in order to be picked up by southbound 26 that evening.

Stubby called Kate and arranged for the Jennings to drive her to the dance if he didn't appear by 9:30. But he also swore to pick her up on time. At the moment, he was prepared to steal a locomotive in order to get Kate to that dance promptly. He packed his tools, and just had time to catch an accommodation train.

Arriving at Ashley, while dispatcher Barr glowered at him through the op's bay window, Stubby examined the crippled express car and found his problem even simpler than he had hoped. One of the trucks needed a column bolt and the top arch bar was sprung. Enlisting the services of two trackmen, Stubby soon had the new bolt in place, a block placed over the head of the column, and the jack slacked off until the car's weight forced down the sprung arch bar. A nut and lock nut on the column bolt finished the job.

Stubby repacked his tools, dusted off the armored blue serge, and strolled over to the station. A crack train, Number Six southbound, passed Ashley in 10 minutes. If he could board that train Stubby would arrive in Kirby in plenty of time to pick Kate up for the dance. All he had to do was to persuade the dispatcher, who happened to be Barr, to stop the train. Barr had the authority to stop it.

It was quite early on a pleasant summer evening in June. Stubby walked to the open office door and looked blandly in at Barr, hostile and withdrawn under a battered green visor, as he methodically and leisurely scratched an entry or two on his train sheet.

"Mr. Barr," said Stubby pleasantly, "that cripple's ready to roll again. But I have an important job at Kirby at nine tonight. Number Six is due in a few minutes. It would be a big help if you could stop her and help me get in town in a hurry."

Barr pulled an imaginary wisp of hair from the point of his fountain pen and went on writing. Stubby leaned against the door frame for quite a while.

"I asked you a question, Mr. Barr," Stubby reminded the DS mildly.

Barr carefully capped his pen and placed it in his shirt pocket. He folded his train sheet and put it away. Then he rubbed his nose a moment, pulled out a small nail file, used it on his left thumb, put the file away, rose slowly to his feet—and then whirled on Stubby in a towering rage.

"Get out of my office, you pint-sized runt! *Out!* I wouldn't stop Six on Ashley Hill if you were bleeding to death. Sorry you're not. Beat it!"

"What else is on the line?" asked Stubby calmly. Barr choked and said hoarsely,

"There's a hotshot freight at 9:12. Wind yourself around a wheel. You'll get to Kirby. Now get out!"

STUBBY drifted out to the platform and sat down on a bench near the waiting-room door. It was a beautiful evening, hushed and calm, with a sky full of stars, the sound of crickets and frogs, the smell of new-mown hay. Stubby calmly considered Barr, a good dispatcher, but somewhat lacking as a human being.

Yet he really couldn't blame Barr too much for refusing to stop Six at Ashley. Six usually had a heavy consist of Pullmans and mail, a tight schedule, and always roared down the three-mile stretch

of Ashley Hill at 70 or better. Stubby shook his head. Barr was right. He'd watch Six roar by and catch the redball later when it stopped for water. Kate, armed with his instructions, would have to wait.

Stubby whiled away the next few minutes making a methodical inventory of his progress with Kate. Never for a moment did he doubt his final success, but definitely he had a long way to go.

Quite suddenly, against the velvet star-studded sky, Stubby noticed the first faint glare of an engine headlight on the far side of Ashley Hill, and then he heard the distant mellow tones of Number Six whistling for some country crossing. The sound seemed to float to him on the fragrant night air. Six's headlight suddenly winked at him through distant trees, a great gleaming silver eye flinging a cone of light on the shining rails three miles away. On top of the ridge a long sweeping S curve led into the straight stretch down the mild grade of Ashley Hill.

STUBBY watched the silver eye flash and flicker through the trees. Then the engine flashed into view—and abruptly Stubby sat erect, his square powerful hands resting firmly on his knees. Even at that distance he was sure he had seen a flash of flame either in front of the pilot or under it. Over two miles away, the engine swept into the wide reverse curve leading into the three-mile straightaway.

This time, Stubby stood up. There were no trees now to obstruct his clear view of the rapidly moving train. Even at that distance Stubby distinctly saw a streak of fire flash from the pilot, only to vanish again. Then, as the engine leaned heavily on the curve, the flame reappeared, increased in volume, and seemed to stream far back under the pilot.

A GS 2500 Class Mountain type of engine was hauling Number Six. Stubby's protracted studies had taught him everything about that engine he needed to know. He knew at once what had happened. He ran quickly into Barr's office.

"Mr. Barr," said Stubby, without raising his voice, "you'll have to stop Six at once. You can just make it. Her engine's got a broken main spring and she's dragging her pilot. She can hit the ditch any time."

Barr, of course, thought this sudden request was nothing but a diabolical scheme by Stubby to get Six stopped at Ashley. He turned white with rage and words hissed from him like live steam.

"You little faker, your life isn't safe in this office. That train's two miles away. I suppose you can count her driver spokes. Now get out—and ride that freight drag and like it."

Stubby looked at Barr. Barr looked at Stubby. The distant thunder of the train and the long resonant moan of Six's whistle rode the night air, much closer this time.

Stubby's mind, behind his narrowed eyes, was racing. That train had to be stopped. The automatic block and Barr's train-order signal over the station both stood at clear. Then Stubby noticed that Barr's lanterns, two white and one red, were lighted and set out just behind the stove.

With a single deft motion Stubby swept up the red lantern and raced for the platform. Barr made strangled noises in his throat and dived after him.

Number Six was now less than two miles away and traveling fast, a crimson flare of flame shooting back under her pilot. Stubby rushed to the rails and swung an old-fashioned "washout," an imperative signal for an emergency stop. In fact, he swung two "washouts" before Barr reached him, grabbed for the lantern, got hold of it, and then aimed a feeble left jab at Stubby.

That was a mistake, and a bad one. Stubby deftly shifted his grip on the lantern to his left hand and almost simultaneously landed a lightning right on Barr's lean jaw with all the weight of his stocky body behind it. The blow wrenched Barr's hand from the lantern and propelled him several feet through the night air. He sprawled on the station platform and lay still.

Stubby's red lantern swung more "washouts" in wide imperative arcs. He knew the engineer of Six faced a dramatic dilemma. He was rushing down a clear track with a clear block signal, a clear train order signal, and a shadowy maniac between the rails waving a red lantern in an emergency stop at him. What would he do?

THE train roared closer with no hint of slackening speed. Outlined like some animated puppet in the white blaze of her headlight, Stubby had only one string left to his bow. He jumped from the rails to the platform, waved one more vigorous "washout," and then held the red lantern abruptly stationary high above his head.

That is a rail hand's topper to any stop signal. It told Six's engineer that if he didn't stop, Stubby's lantern would be hurled right through the cab window at his head.

Two sharp blasts from Six's whistle abruptly acknowledged Stubby's challenge. The roar of the engine's exhaust suddenly ceased. The brakes on the long train slammed on for a full emergency stop. Number Six rocked and shuddered towards Stubby with fire-rimmed wheels, brake shoes biting into whirling wheels, showers of crimson sparks and clouds of acrid blue smoke spitting into the darkness.

Number Six stopped just past Stubby with a jolt that brought train crew and passengers swarming from hastily opened vestibule doors. Stubby ran toward the cab. The engineer, a stolid veteran named Benson, was already on the ground when he got there. The fireman was just scrambling down the ladder. Benson, a mountain of a man, gaped

as Stubby's stocky little figure popped up before him.

"What the hell's going on here?" he demanded. Then he saw Barr's body on the platform and he gaped some more. The fireman, a new man Stubby didn't know, ran up and snapped, "Who's this crazy kid?"

Trainmen, mail clerks and passengers now swarmed along the platform and a Voice with a great deal of authority all at once took over.

"Who stopped this train?" demanded the Voice.

EVERYONE fell back. The Voice belonged to Mr. Ellis, the division superintendent, whose business car was tacked to the rear of Number Six that night. The super was usually a calm man but his blood pressure was rising as he stalked into the suddenly silent group.

"I did," said Stubby. Ellis recognized Stubby at once. Then he saw Barr lying motionless on the platform.

"Good heavens! Who did that to Barr?"

"I did," said Stubby mildly. "I had to. Sir, if you'll have Mr. Benson bring his torch along, I'll show you what's happened."

Stubby led a wondering group to the head end. Someone gave Mr. Ellis an electric torch. Benson secured an old-time oil flare from his cab.

"Please look at that pilot assembly, Mr. Benson," said Stubby, "and then put your torch under the boiler, just ahead of the right lead driver."

Mr. Ellis was ahead of Benson. The pilot assembly had let down, canted to the right, with the footplate all but resting on the rail head. Then Ellis darted to the right lead driver and flashed his torch inside and under the boiler. He straightened quickly as Benson bent beside him, peering past him.

"Good Lord, Benson," snapped Mr. Ellis, "you've got a broken main spring."

Benson looked and then faced Ellis, his face taut.

"You're right, sir. I felt some queer motion on top of the Hill but thought it was bad roadbed." He turned to Stubby, his eyes very bright. "Kid, will you tell me how you managed to spot a broken spring when I was a mile away?"

"Two miles away," Stubby corrected him quietly, and then explained. He was aware this type of engine had too much weight on the lead drivers, a defect in their original construction, and there had been two similar mishaps in the past year. The flame from the pilot pushed down on the rail head told him what had happened. Mr. Ellis listened carefully to Stubby's explanation.

A little later Mr. Barr was revived and Stubby apologized humbly and handsomely for his precipitate actions. They even shook hands. By this time the engine's pilot assembly had been shored up and it was decided to allow Number Six to proceed at 25 miles an hour to Kirby without calling a relief engine. As a precaution, a brakeman was to ride the pilot to observe the engine's motion en route.

Mr. Ellis drew Stubby away from a large crowd of admirers.

"A high frog, a crossing plank, a cattle guard—a lot of things could have ditched us," mused Mr. Ellis. "Stubby, when do you want to take your exams for the dispatchers' pool?"

"Right away," said Stubby. Mr. Ellis looked at his watch just as two sharp whistle blasts notified him that Number Six was ready to roll again.

"Let's make it Monday," Mr. Ellis compromised. "And you're my guest into Kirby. Join me in my car."

Deep in a comfortable leather chair in Mr. Ellis' car, Stubby informed the super of his date with Kate Arnold. Mr. Ellis laughed and then looked thoughtfully at Stubby.

"You'll make the date. . . . Well, your old man tells me you've always wanted to be a dispatcher."

"Guess I have since I was weaned, sir," said Stubby, smiling briefly and gazing with appreciation about the comfortably appointed business car.

"Any special job in mind?"

"I'd like Mr. Barr's job—when he retires," said Stubby.

"It's possible," said Mr. Ellis, studying Stubby closely. "It's a good rung on the Midland's ladder." Some imp of curiosity urged him to add, "How high are you aiming to climb, Stubby?"

The only trace of shyness Stubby had revealed for a long time momentarily fluttered across his composed face as he gazed about Mr. Ellis' car with obvious relish. Then he said modestly, quietly, but firmly:

"Some day, if I'm worth it, I'd like to have your job, Mr. Ellis."

Mr. Ellis started and looked out the window as a switch lamp slid slowly by. For a moment he resembled Stubby's father. A momentary expression of mingled admiration and awe flickered briefly across his strong features. Then he smiled, almost cautiously.

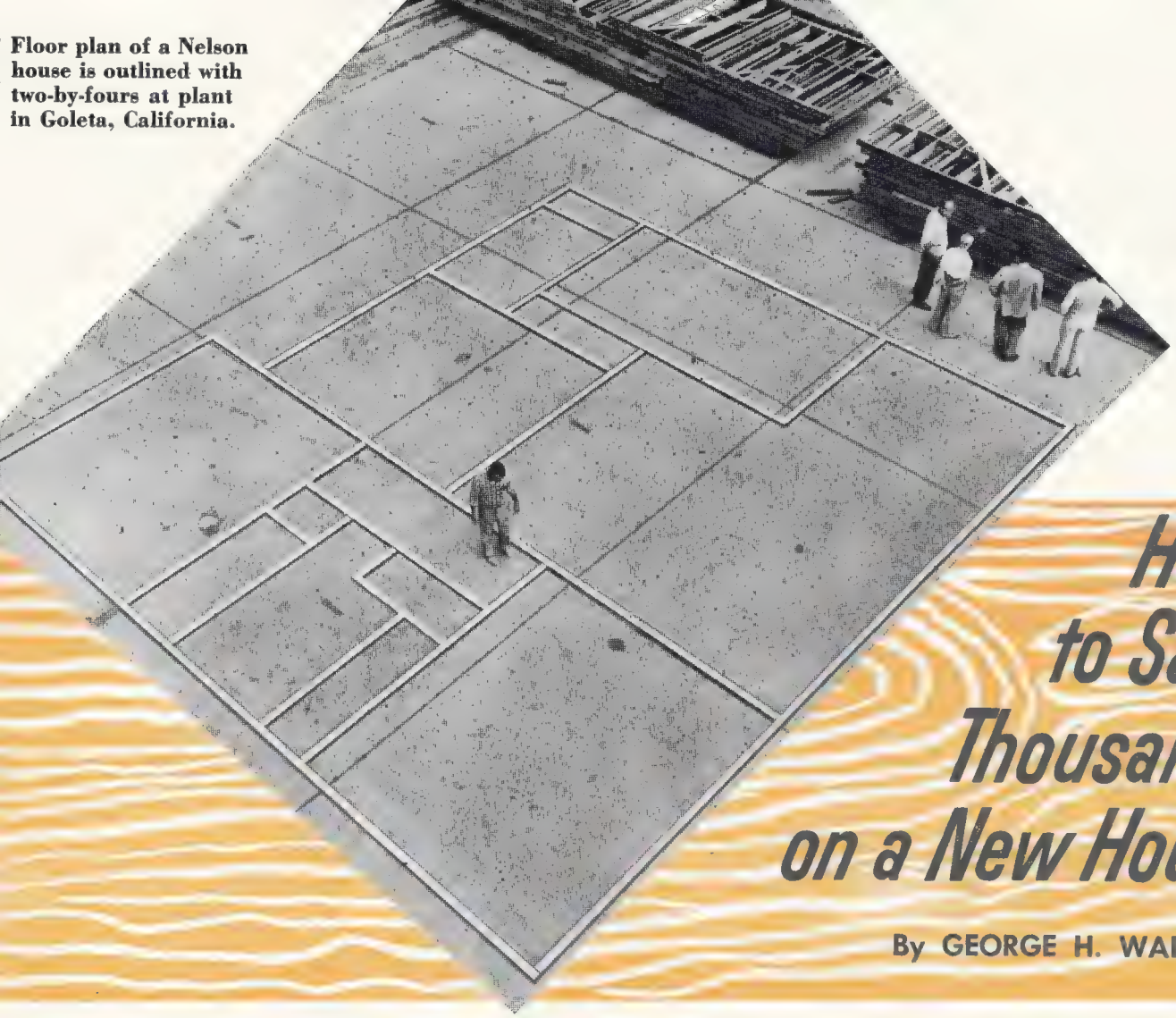
"I'd hate to bet a ten spot you won't get it," he said softly.

—BY HOLLISTER NOBLE

make it easy

SAY, MEN, before puttying up those loose windows this fall try mixing the putty with paint the color of the window frames. This idea has saved me many hours for more interesting pursuits.

—Mike Smith, Saginaw, Mich.



Floor plan of a Nelson house is outlined with two-by-fours at plant in Goleta, California.

How to Save Thousands on a New House

By GEORGE H. WALTZ, Jr.

On a finish-it-yourself house, the builder does the hard construction work, you do the easy jobs.

ANYONE WHO HAS a nodding acquaintance with a hammer and saw can now save $2,000 or more on a new home. For, thanks to a husky, fast-growing offshoot of the do-it-yourself trend, it's now possible to buy an unfinished house just as you'd buy an unfinished piece of furniture. The builder does the hard and complicated parts and you do the easier ones in your spare time.

There are all sorts of finish-it-yourself deals available. You can buy a house in just about any stage of completion that you want.

Although the exact descriptive names for these homes vary with the locality and the builder, they fall into two general classifications: (1) "shell houses," which are complete on the outside but have no innards at all; and (2) "package houses," which besides being finished on the outside also have the necessary interior studding, the basic wiring and plumbing, and floors. A "package" naturally costs more than a "shell."

Typical of the de luxe type of package houses are the attractive ranch homes of several hundred couples who live in and around Santa Barbara, California. Each of these couples bought a finish-it-yourself house from Leslie Nelson, one of the first builders in the country to go into the package-house field in a big way.

Here's how Nelson's plan works: All you need if you want to buy a Nelson finish-it-yourself house is a plot of ground worth at least $1,000 and located in a zoned residential area. That's the only real cash investment. It takes care of the down payment on the house. The rest is financed.

The next step is to get a construction loan from a local bank. Then a Nelson crew grades the plot, makes the necessary plumbing and sewage installations, and pours the concrete foundation slab. A week or so later, after the concrete has dried, another Nelson crew arrives with a truck loaded with wall sections, roof trusses, and all the structural parts for the house. In not too many hours, the trained crew has put up the wall sections and hoisted the roof into place. Finally, when the basic wiring has been put in place and the house has

been lathed for stucco on the outside, it is ready for the owners to take over their part of the job.

Nelson always takes them to the garage first. For there, neatly stacked and ready for use, are all the pre-cut lumber parts, the wallboard, pre-hung doors, hardware, assembled kitchen cabinets, floor tiles, paints and other materials needed to complete the house. He even presents the owners with a complete set of tools including a broom for cleaning up, a set of carefully detailed plans and a book of easy-to-follow instructions.

Then, to make sure there can be no possibility of a hitch—and to calm any fears that the couple may have about their ability to finish the job—Nelson reminds them that professional help will be standing by to take over the really tough jobs like finishing up the plumbing, wiring and installation of fixtures, and applying the final exterior finish. He also tells them that an inspector will be stopping by from time to time to check on their work and to help them avoid mistakes.

All this is included in the overall price: $8,950 for a three-bedroom ranch house with connecting garage, or $8,350 for a two-bedroom layout.

On the average, it takes a couple with the normal amount of know-how about two-and-a-half months, working evenings and weekends, to finish a Nelson house. When completed, it's worth about $2,000 more than it cost—a nice bit of equity that makes it possible for the owners to get a low-cost FHA loan. This loan not only covers the cost of the house, but the financing charges as well. What's more, that equity, which costs the average couple only about 360 hours of spare-time work, figures out to be worth $5.55 an hour, or about $222 for a 40-hour week! Not bad working pay, considering that the "bonus" is a home.

Mass Production Keeps Costs Low

To keep costs low on his package homes, Nelson uses mass-production methods at his Goleta, California, factory. Wall sections and roof trusses are assembled on giant jigs and patterns. Men operating batteries of power machines whip out standardized cabinets and pre-hung doors. When all the parts for a complete house have been assembled, they are stacked together in a large open-storage area. When needed, the entire package is simply loaded on a truck and transported, together with the construction crew, to the building site.

Although the exteriors of the houses are basically standardized, a choice of several floor plans is available for each style of house. Also, if the owner wants to pay a few hundred dollars extra, he can have a fireplace.

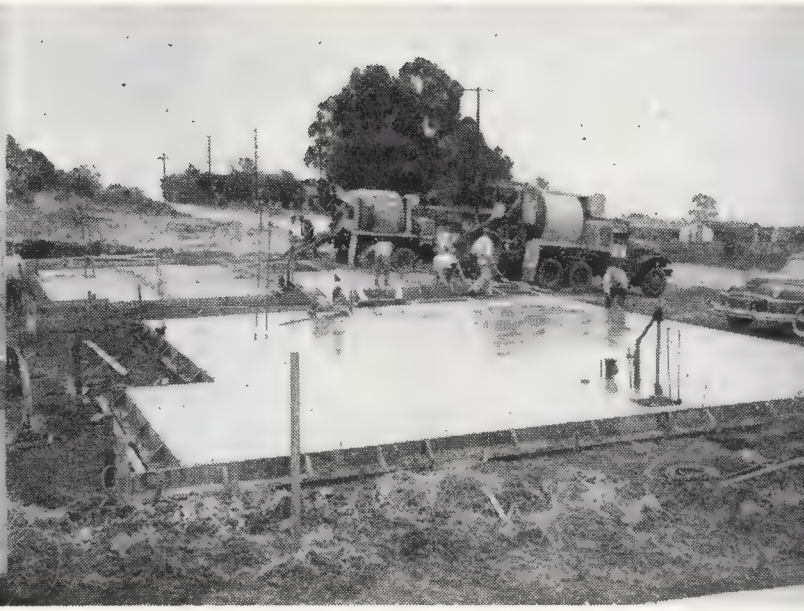
The jobs that the owner has to do to complete his house aren't too difficult. They include such things as installing the wallboard walls, laying the asphalt floor tiles, putting the cabinets into place, placing the insulation under the roof and painting the interior. Since all of the doors are pre-hung at the factory, doors and jambs go into place easily.

What amazes Les Nelson is that the quality of the owners' amateur handiwork is usually better

A Nelson-Way three-bedroom shell house after finishing by the buyer. For step-by-step pictures, turn the page.

PHOTOS BY JOEL CONWAY

1. A family man signs for a Nelson shell house.



2. A factory crew pours the cement foundation.

than that of the average professional. "They take what amounts to untiring pride in their homes," he says. "Quite often when a husband and wife get going on the job they come up with ideas for changes and additions that we haven't even thought of."

Nelson is currently extending his operations to include Texas, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. Similar home-building schemes are now being offered in just about every section of the country.

A good example on the East Coast is the Housing Guild, Inc., which operates within a 200-mile radius of New York City and offers a wide range of both shell and package houses. Although they, like Nelson, specialize in more or less standardized designs, they will also build a finish-it-yourself house based on any workable plan, and complete it to just about any degree that the owner wants.

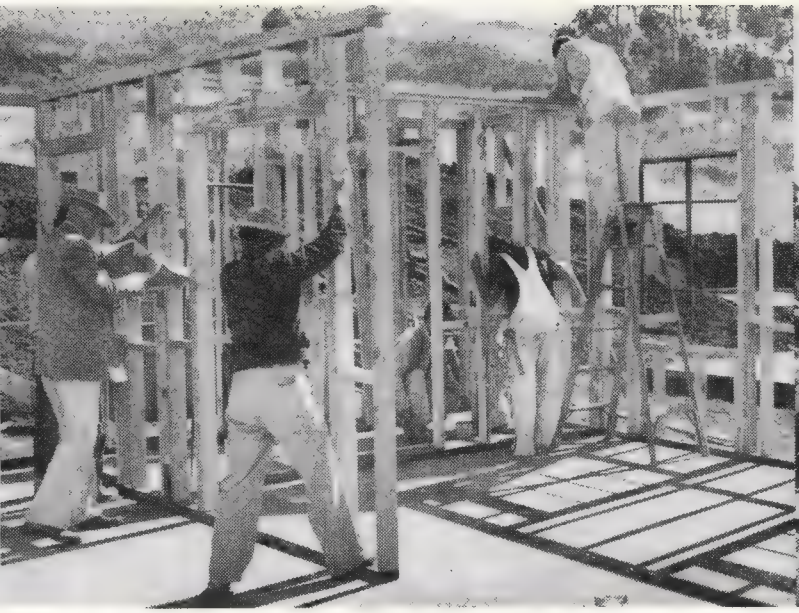
The cost of a shell house can run from as little as $2,200 for a summer bungalow to as much as $6,000 for a year-round house. Package houses, custom-built on any plot, run from about $5,000 to $9,000. The package house put up by the Housing Guild is about 80 per cent completed. The shells, however, require complete interior finishing, including the installation of plumbing, wiring and flooring.

Organizations similar to that of Leslie Nelson's in the Southwest and the Housing Guild in the Northeast also operate in New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, and Maryland, in a number of the southern states, and in the Midwest. As a matter of fact, even in sections of the country where there are no large specialized organizations set up to build finish-it-yourself homes, local builders and lumber companies in most cases will cooperate with a home hunter who wants to buy and finish a house. Naturally, those builders who make a business of shell and package homes are generally in a position to offer better values, provide all the necessary materials for finishing the house, and offer more building-help services.

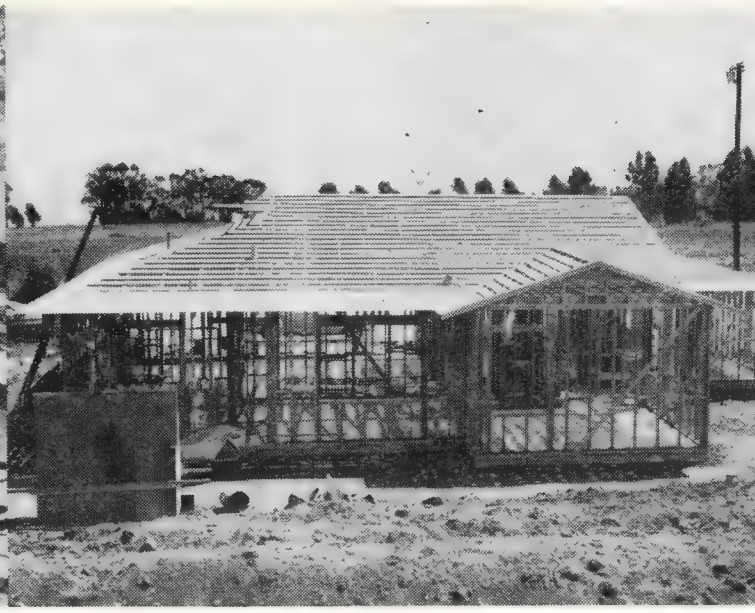
The home hunter who decides to buy a finish-it-

5. The roof is shingled. Note the redwood siding.

6. A coat of stucco is applied to the exterior.



3. Wall sections are installed by another crew.



4. The house's main skeleton now stands complete.

yourself house—particularly if he plans to buy from a local builder who is doing it on a one-shot basis—should proceed slowly, investigating all the angles before signing on the dotted line.

The selection of the right site for the house, for example, is vitally important. What may at first glance look like a big bargain in a piece of land may not turn out to be such a bargain in the long run. Basic facilities such as water, electricity and sewage are worth paying extra for if they already exist. The cost of drilling a deep well, or of running a long line for electric power, can very quickly skyrocket the total price for a "cheap" piece of property.

Local zoning laws and building codes should be studied carefully. In some cases, compliance with all the local rules and regulations can mean a good many extra building dollars and construction headaches.

Financing, too, may be difficult when working with a local builder who is not in the finish-it-yourself business. The important thing is to make sure that the layout and the quality of the basic construction will meet the standards for government-insured financing.

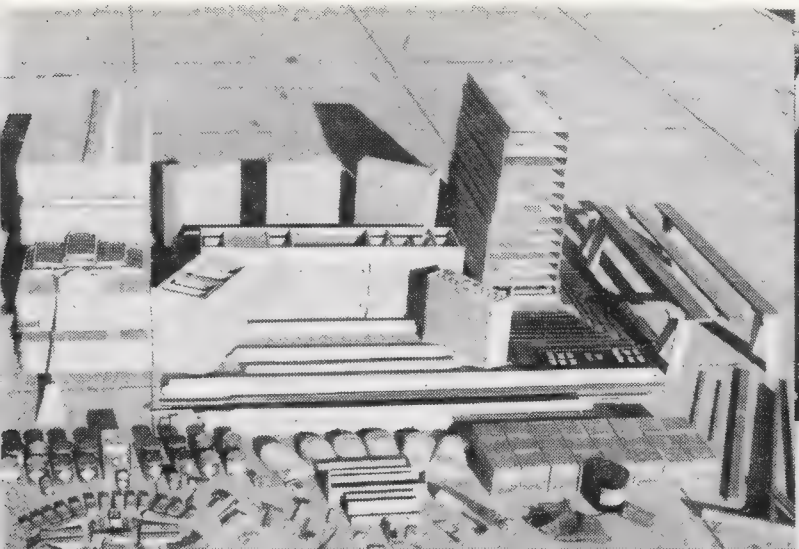
Most of these details, naturally, are taken care of when you deal with a specialist in the finish-it-yourself field.

A recent check of the files of the Association of Better Business Bureaus failed to uncover a single complaint from a buyer of a standard shell or package home. On the other hand, a survey conducted not long ago by the National Association of Home Builders uncovered hundreds of cases of disillusioned young couples in all sections of the country who had tried to build their own homes from the ground up without professional help. They had bitten off more work than their know-how could chew.

The finish-it-yourself house seems to offer the practical solution. It gives the fellow with that urge to build a chance to have his fun without overtaxing his abilities or his pocketbook.

(Continued on next page)

7. Interior materials are stacked in the garage.



8. Owner now takes over. Here he nails ceiling.

9. **A factory craftsman tapes the wallboard seams for smoothness.**

11. **Owner lays floor tiles. Manufacturer supplies specific directions and the tools for all such operations.**

10. **Putting in the pre-hung doors is another of the many finishing jobs calling for no professional skill.**

12. **A friend of the owner does his bit by installing rock-wool batts between the ceiling rafters for insulation.**

ASK YOURSELF...

Before you buy land:

1.—Is water and electricity readily available?

2.—If a well has to be drilled, is the water table high enough to make drilling fairly economical? A deep well costs money.

3.—Is the land fairly level and clear? Extensive grading and/or excavating can boost the cost considerably.

4.—Is the drainage good? Retaining walls to divert water after heavy rains can be expensive to build.

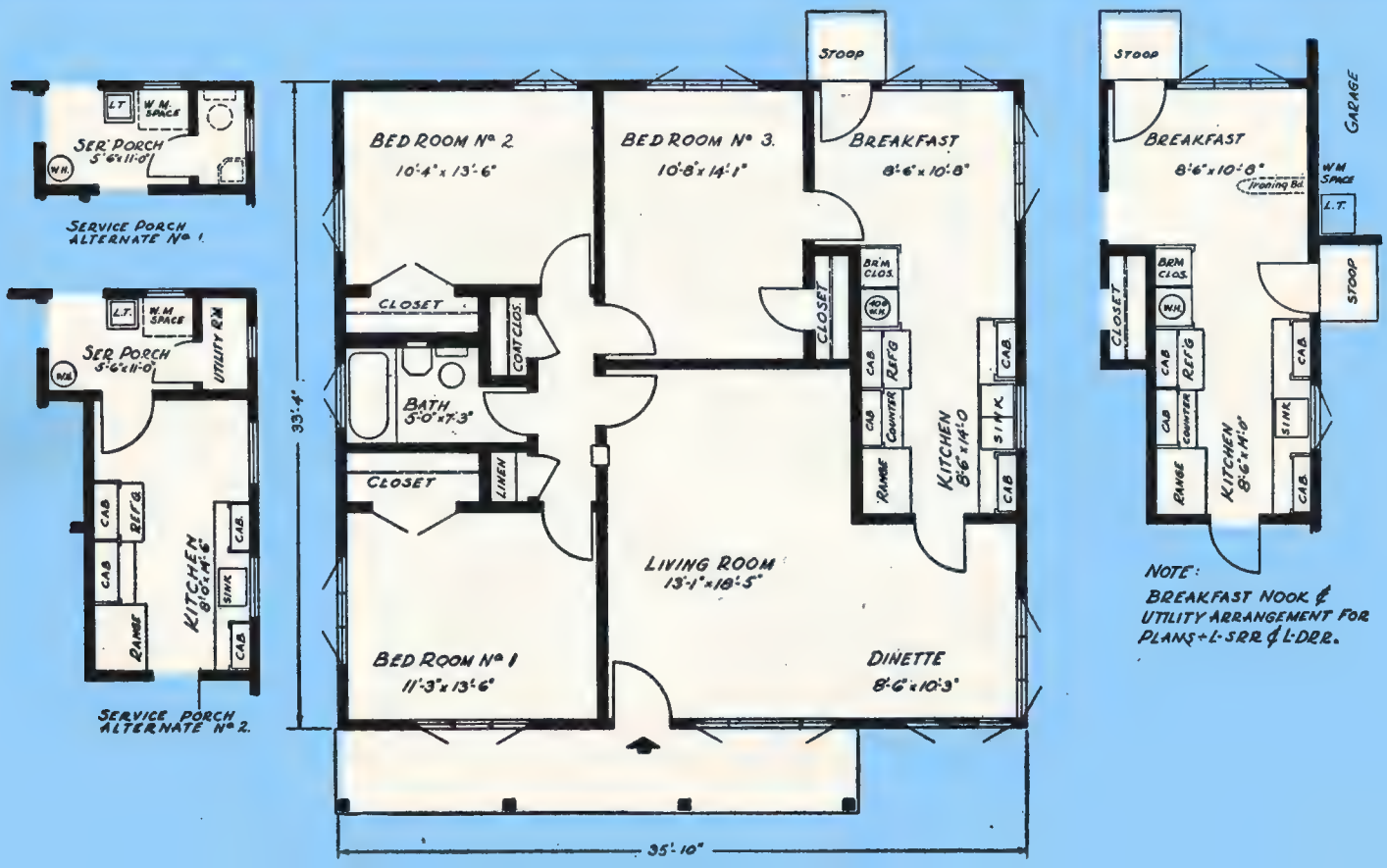
5.—Are roads and pavements already in, or will there be future assessments to build them?

6.—Does the general neighborhood suit you? Is it established and fairly near schools, transportation and a shopping center?

Before you contract with any builder other than one already established as a builder of "finish-it-yourself shell or package homes":

1.—Has he built enough homes in the community to be well aware of all local building laws and codes?
2.—Is he up on all the building requirements for government-insured loans.
3.—Is he willing to show you complete plans for the house, indicating clearly what he will build and what you will have to finish?
4.—Is he willing to supply at a fair price the materials that will be needed to finish the house?
5.—Can he provide professional help at extra cost to give you a hand on the tougher jobs?
6.—And most important of all, have you investigated the financing of the plans? Some lenders are not too keen about putting up money for a house that is to be finished by an amateur unless the house is a "shell" or "package" built by an established "finish-it-yourself" company.

Plans of the house. Alternate arrangements are given in which *(left)* breakfast area is replaced by service porch, with either a lavatory or a utility room; and *(right)* garage is attached.



The Way it Ought

BY HUGH FOSBURGH

The great wounded buck seemed headed for slow agony in some snowy mountain thicket . . . unless the old hunter could right the blundering error of the young.

JAMIE PORTER squatted on his heels, looking at the watery bright-red blood beads in the snow. He wasn't listening to young Harry.

Young Harry was saying one thing after another, as fast as they came jamming into his excited mind. He was saying, "Gee, Uncle Jamie, did you get a good look at him? He was a monster. . . . He was the biggest buck I ever saw. . . . How many points would you say he had, Uncle Jamie? Fourteen? More than that? . . . I'll bet he'll go two-fifty at least. Maybe more. Wouldn't you say so, Uncle Jamie? . . . We'll get him sure. I know we'll get him. Won't we, Uncle Jamie? . . . I hit him hard. I know I hit him hard. . . . Don't you think so, Uncle Jamie?"

And Jamie, squatting on his heels, thought of the way it might have been, the way it ought to have been. And the mean awful way it was now.

JAMIE'S brother, old Harry, had almost cried when Jamie stopped by to see him. He was too crippled-up to even get out of his chair.

"I suppose you're heading back in to get you a big one," said Harry. Every year, for over 40 years, they had headed back in together.

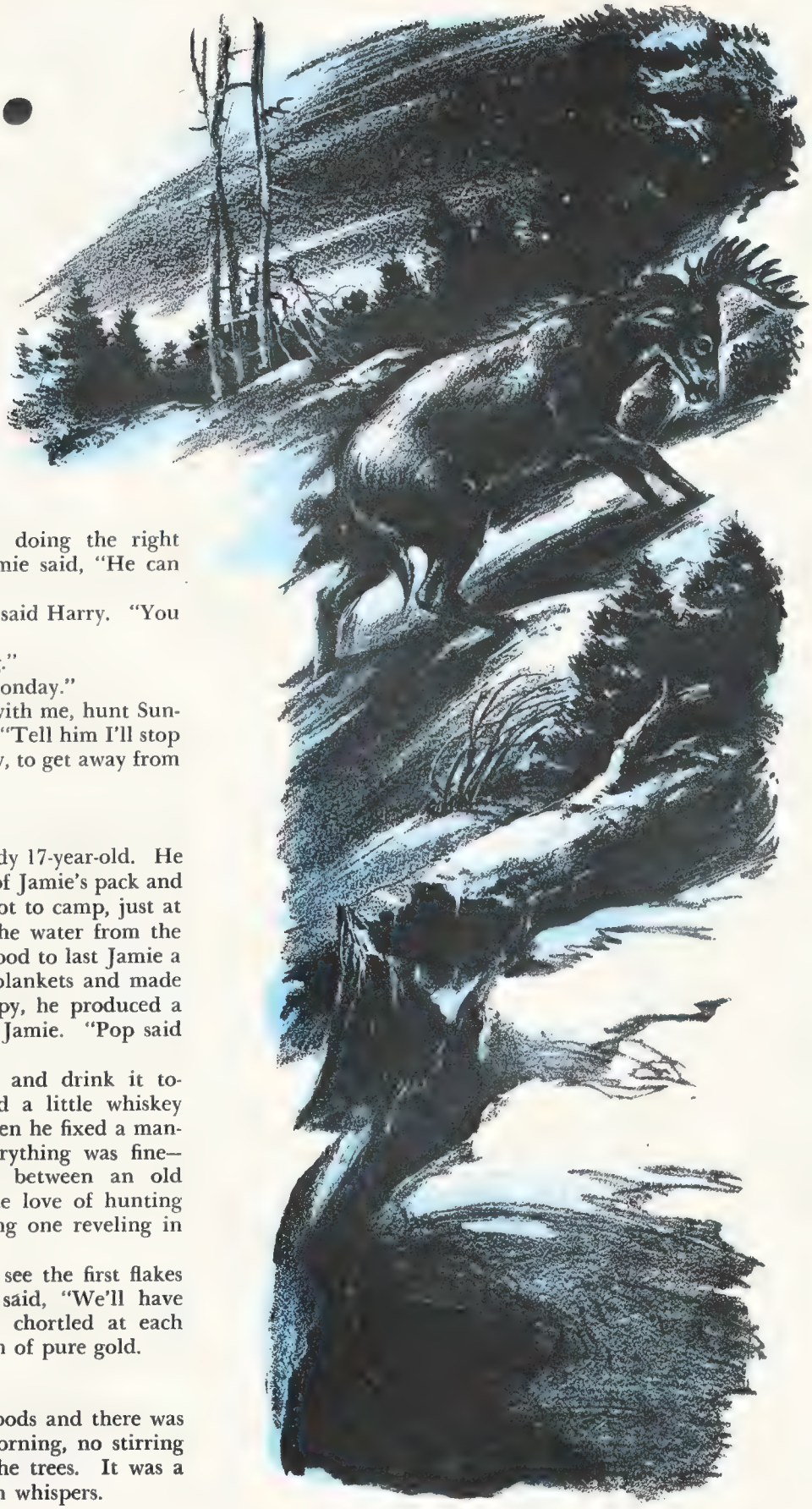
"I aim to," said Jamie. "Tomorrow noon."

"Get a nice set of horns for the porch," said Harry.

Jamie smiled. The horns on his porch—the horns of nearly every buck he had ever killed—were a record of the best days of his life, and he remembered everything about each set of horns—the place where he had killed the deer, the method of finding it, the kind of weather and the time of day, the exact way the deer had looked at the instant of firing. "I'll see what I can do," he said, feeling miserable and guilty about Harry.

After a while, Harry said, "I guess Sonny'll have to make out for himself this year."

to be...



Instantly, knowing he was doing the right thing and wanting to do it, Jamie said, "He can come with me."

"He'd spoil things for you," said Harry. "You like to hunt alone."

"He wouldn't spoil anything."

"Anyhow, he has to work Monday."

"He can come in Saturday with me, hunt Sunday, and walk out," said Jamie. "Tell him I'll stop by at noon." And he left quickly, to get away from Harry who wasn't going.

YOUNG HARRY was a fine, dandy 17-year-old. He took all the heavy stuff out of Jamie's pack and put it in his own. When they got to camp, just at dark, he lit the fire and toted the water from the brook and brought in enough wood to last Jamie a week. Then he shook out the blankets and made up the bunks. Then, very happy, he produced a pint of liquor and handed it to Jamie. "Pop said you was to drink this for him."

"We'll pretend you're Pop and drink it together," said Jamie. He mixed a little whiskey with a lot of water for Harry, then he fixed a man-size drink for himself, and everything was fine—the way it can be sometimes between an old hunter who has stored away the love of hunting and lost none of it, and a young one reveling in the thought of tomorrow.

When Jamie looked out to see the first flakes sliding past the window, and said, "We'll have tracking snow tomorrow," they chortled at each other like two miners with a pan of pure gold.

SNOW had overpowered the woods and there was a blanket of silence that morning, no stirring of the wind, no movement of the trees. It was a time to move softly and speak in whispers.

It was a time, thought Jamie, for something very fine to happen, something to remember privately for always.

Two miles from camp, on the beech ridge above the lake, they came on the two deer tracks, one dainty and high-stepping, the other a shuffling arrogant electrifying challenge in the snow.

Then they saw the doe. She was uphill, standing broadside in the open, watching them. Then she wheeled, and went loping across the ridge. Just as she vanished, the buck vaulted out of a patch of brush, and in one flash they saw all of him —the massive unbelievable horns and the great hoary-gray body—and he was gone without a sound, like a phantom, leaving them staring at where he had been.

Jamie stood his rifle against a tree trunk and stuffed tobacco into his pipe. Then he squatted on his heels to think. Every now and then, he nodded vaguely at young Harry's frenzy of chatter.

The deer were rutting, Jamie was sure of that. The doe would be in charge so, given a chance to quiet down, they wouldn't go far. The doe would stop to let the buck catch up, and after that, the buck wouldn't leave her. The deer would watch the back track for a while, then they'd get to rutting again and forget that they'd ever been scared.

"We'll get him yet," said Jamie, believing it.

Two hours later, they had left the tracks and gone to the far side of the ridge, then along it for a mile, then back to the top.

It was Jamie's plan to get in front of the deer, in front of them and above, so that the deer would move across the valley where he and Harry could intercept them.

Now they were standing on the ridge, motionless, watching the valley. There was nothing, just the still trees, and the snow, and the silence.

And then, in this engraved picture, appeared the doe. She came from a clump of evergreens, stalking slowly, stiff-legged, with her tail straight up like a flag. Jamie, watching her, with one restraining hand on Harry's arm, knew that the very fine thing—the thing that he and Harry would never forget—was about to happen.

The buck came out. He came from the thicket in a close-coupled horse-gaited trot, head low to the ground, grunting wild deep guttural grunts, bee-lining for the doe.

Out of the side of his eye, Jamie saw Harry jerk up his gun, and Jamie said, "Don't shoot, he'll stop when he gets to her," but it was too much for Harry.

In the next 20 seconds, while Jamie stood immobilized by horror, Harry made all the awful sickening mistakes that an unknowing unthinking hunter can make. His first shot smashed the buck's hind leg at the joint. While the buck made short frenzied dashes first in one direction, then another, Harry jerked off three more shots that didn't hit anything. Then the buck, stupefied, stopped where Harry couldn't see it, so Harry made a floundering run towards it. The buck, seeing him, came to its senses, and made off in a wild thrashing charge while Harry flung desperate ridiculous shots until his gun was empty.

Now Jamie squatted on his heels looking at the scattered blood-beads in the snow and the erratic hoof-slashed trail that led away, feeling shame and guilt and remorse, thinking of the buck, crippled now, losing strength, doomed to a useless slow agony—the way no buck should ever be.

And young Harry, bubbling with lusty excitement. . . "We'll get him, don't you think, Uncle Jamie? . . . We'll get him for sure, won't we? . . . He's hit hard, Uncle Jamie, I know it. . ."

Briefly, Jamie thought of telling Harry all the things he'd done wrong, but he didn't have the heart for it. Some other time maybe.

"Shall we start after him now, Uncle Jamie? We've rested him long enough, don't you think?"

"Let's see. . . ." Jamie was sure of one thing—he and Harry together would never get that buck. Harry would be excited, he'd want to go too fast and be careless, and if they saw the buck, Harry would flub the chance for sure.

Jamie would have to go after him alone.

make it easy

Do you have a lampshade that's really battered? Here's the way to make a completely different shade of it: Mend all damage with pieces of newspaper using household glue. After glue is dry give the outside of the shade a heavy coat of shellac. While shellac is wet, sprinkle shade generously with sawdust. When this surface is thoroughly dry, apply second coat of shellac. Allow for complete drying; then apply coat of enamel to the outside. Enamel the inside of the shade white to improve its reflecting qualities. Now you have a lampshade with the new, rough-textured look!

—Dorothy Reese Ransom, St. Petersburg, Fla.

Help the other fellow by passing along tricks and gadgets you've dreamed up for making work around the house easier. **Bluebook** ***will pay $5 for each "Make It Easy" published, but none can be acknowledged or returned.***

Jamie went through the process of loading his pipe. It was while he was lighting it that he had the inspiration, and by the time the match went out, the inspiration had blossomed into a plan of deception that would take Harry out of this.

"He'll head for water first thing," lied Jamie, knowing a leg-hit deer would do a lot of things before he got thirsty.

"That's right," said Harry.

"It looks to me like he'll head for the lake—most likely where that neck of alders comes down. You know that neck of alders, Harry?"

"Yop. Sure."

"It's the quickest way he can get to water, and he'll come sneaking through the alders. Do you think you can get to those alders, Harry?"

"Why don't you go and I'll follow your trail?" Harry wanted the excitement of following the tracks and seeing the blood.

"Nope. He's your buck and I want you to get him." This was the truth but Jamie knew that Harry wasn't going to get him.

Harry started off. Then Jamie spoke again, casual. "Say, Harry. . ."

Harry turned.

"There's just a chance he won't come that way."

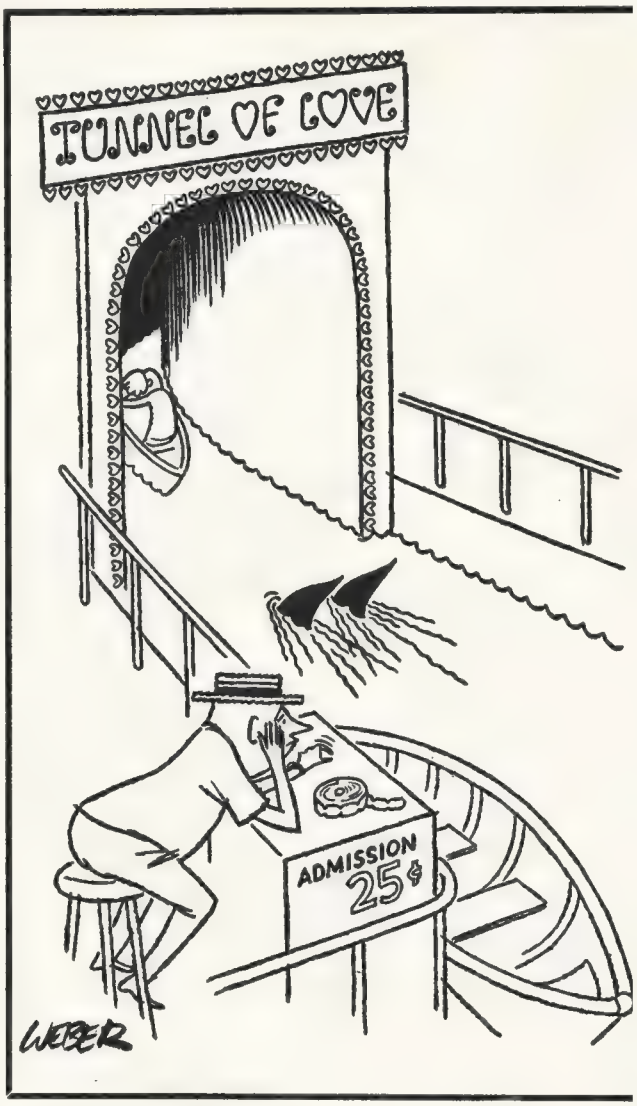
"Ummmm?"

"If he doesn't—if I don't show up in a couple of hours, say—then most likely you'd better head for home."

Harry started to protest.

"The trail home is kind of tricky in the dark. You don't want to get lost." Jamie knew that that would do it, and it did.

He watched until Harry was out of sight, feeling guilty about this trick he had played. Then he forgot about him, and was alone with the silence of the woods. But it was no longer the friendly expectant hush it had been that morning—it was the silence of resentment, of hostility, of scorn for this mean thing he had allowed to happen. Jamie felt himself an enemy now, hated and feared. "We'll get him yet," he said, but this time he had no faith.



THERE was no trick to following the buck, even when its track crossed the trails of other deer. Always there were the uneven marks of the three feet, and the thin scattering of blood, and the trailing slashes where the shattered leg had skittered and flapped in the snow.

The track angled off the ridge, then lined out for the low swamp country that lay to the west. Without a falter, it plunged into the haven of evergreens and alders and tamarack, and was swallowed up.

Jamie knew the buck would stop in the swamp. It would stop in the thickest place it could find, and maybe lie down, or just huddle there, watching its back track, listening. Maybe, after a time, it would begin to feel safe. It would forget about Jamie, and then it would lie there, sickening, nursing its leg, getting stiff.

Jamie had to get the buck the first time. If he scared it and let it get away, the buck would know for sure it was being followed and wouldn't calm down for hours.

As soon as he had got fairly into the swamp, Jamie knew it wasn't going to work, that he wasn't going to be able to sneak up on the buck. The boggy unfrozen ground squelched under his feet, the snow came slumping off of every bush that he touched, the brush made soft scratching noises on his windbreaker.

He tried anyway, and came to where the buck had slowed to a hopping gait. Just beyond, there was a clot of blood where it had stopped briefly, then a larger clot, then the track led into a balsam thicket. He's in there, thought Jamie

And the buck *was* in there—Jamie heard him lunge, then the balsams were shaking, then there was a confused muffled crashing in the far alders that died away to nothing.

"That's that," said Jamie, out loud. He squatted, and took out his pipe.

He had given up, as hopeless, the idea of stalking unawares on the buck. He was trying to hound it out of the swamp, to keep after it, to keep it moving, to give it the idea that there was no rest, no safety in the swamp. He was trying to force it out again into the open hardwoods where he could see it and get a shot.

He pushed and groped and stomped his way along the track. He hated his clumsy crashing progress that announced to the buck, and to everything else in the swamp, that James Porter was coming. It made him feel inept and ridiculous.

The trail made three erratic circles of the swamp. Half a dozen times, Jamie came to places where the buck had stopped. Twice he heard the animal move out ahead of him. And once, something agitated a balsam thicket right in front of him, so that the branches waved up and down, ever so slightly, and when Jamie went up to it, there were the tracks and a slaver of blood in the snow.

It isn't going to work, he thought, and kept on.

The sky cleared and the sun came out in an orange burst, then sank out of sight behind Stony Mountain.

"I'll try you once more around," said Jamie, "before calling it quits for the night."

But the buck didn't go round again, the evil thing that was dogging its tracks was finally too much for it. It made its faltering way out of the swamp and broke into a plunging lope through the hardwoods, heading for Stony Mountain.

Jamie followed it out. He got clear of the swamp growth, then sagged against a tree trunk.

He thought of going back to camp for the night. He should have gone long ago—it would be dark miles before he got there. But then he looked at those tantalizing tracks and those shaming tell-tale specks of pink. "I'll follow a ways," he said, "and see where he's headed."

He followed a long ways, to the lip of the steep-narrow ravine that encircles the base of Stony Mountain. He stopped there, looking at the track which plunged steeply down and faded from sight. He peered into the murky shadows of the ravine, trying to pick up the trail farther down, trying to tell which way the deer had gone, and failed.

He was standing there, indecisive, feeling the failure, hating to quit, knowing he had to, when he found himself looking at the buck. It was a quarter mile away, across the ravine, just a small almost-black shape moving up the side of the mountain.

Head down, it was moving upward like a hobbled horse, painfully, very precisely, the front feet going out together, then a humping of the back that brought up the hind leg, then another reaching upward of the front feet. Not stopping. Not looking back. Going up to be alone in the rocks and the stunted spruces.

Jamie watched until the buck was gone, and then it was night.

Maybe it was the long walk in the dark that decided him not to go back to camp. Or the walk back in the morning. Maybe it was plain obstinacy. Or something else. Anyway, Jamie spent the night in the shelter of an overhanging rock.

Methodically, without haste, he made prepara-

A bobcat was intrigued by the blood; it followed the buck again and again.

tions for the long night, collecting his wood, building the fire where heat would reflect from the rock, cutting spruce boughs and drying them thoroughly before he made his seat, then standing interminably by the fire, turning slowly to get the damp from his clothes. At last he settled himself and, taking off one boot, held his stockinged foot to the blaze. Now he allowed himself to realize how tired he was

and to feel the hunger that was a keen weakening pain in his gut. And then he thought of the buck humping its way up the mountain.

"I haven't got things too bad," he said.

He thought of that morning, and of Harry. It seemed a long time ago—it could have been several days—that he and Harry had stood in the eerie dawn silence and seen the miracle flash of that buck as it vaulted out of the thicket and was gone.

Harry would be home now. He would probably be in bed, thinking about the buck, wondering if Jamie had got him, doubting it, knowing he'd never get a chance at another one like that.

He hadn't done right by Harry, he had played a mean trick on him. He should have let Harry come with him. Maybe, if Harry had been along, they could have ambushed the buck there in the big swamp.

He'd have to make it up to Harry.

Then he forgot about Harry, and there was just the grim specter of the buck, crippled, wasting away, sure to die—the way no buck ought to be.

"I'll get him in the morning," said Jamie. He didn't believe it, or disbelieve it.

He closed off all thought, and almost all feeling—the way an old man who has been much alone in the woods can sometimes do, cocooning himself against the night and the cold and the aloneness, and against time—and dozed.

Sometimes, he roused himself sufficiently to build up the fire. And sometimes he was vaguely conscious that there was a mouse under the rock he was leaning against. It kept tickling the eaves under there as it poked and pried and tinkered. And then, sometime, a chill breeze came filtering through the trees, and died away, and came again, stronger, and then the woods were awake and restless with its persistent searching until very quickly, the trees were creaking and swaying and dancing sullenly to the bitter north gale.

Jamie shrugged smaller inside his windbreaker, waiting out the night.

A BOBCAT, looking for whatever it might find, came on the buck track going up the mountain, and was intrigued by the blood. It followed, stepping mostly where the buck had stepped.

Way up in the rocks, in the belt of stunted spruces, it came on the buck lying down. The bobcat sat on its haunches, and they looked at each other until the buck heaved itself up and hobbled out of sight to lie down again. Presently, the bobcat followed, and the same thing happened, and again, and again, many times, until finally the buck left the spruces and picked its way up through the ledges toward the top of the mountain.

Maybe up there, some place, it would be left alone.

The bobcat watched it go, then turned its attention to a den of porcupines.

JAMIE moved up the mountain in the frozen cheerless half-light. His body was weakened and lethargic from hunger and built-up cold, but he wasn't thinking about that. He was thinking that the buck would be in the belt of spruces, and he would have to find it there, and get it. If he ever scared the buck out of the spruces. . . . He wouldn't think about that. He would get it in the spruces.

He came to where the bobcat had intercepted the buck track.

For a while, Jamie didn't pay much attention to the bobcat, but then, slowly, it became clear what had happened. There were the soft round cat-prints, walking where the buck had walked, the places where the cat had sat in the snow, and the big half-circle flattened places, each with the dirty pink smear. Hours later, he came to where the buck had quit the spruces and gone up the mountain.

"Damn you, damn you, damn you," said Jamie to the bobcat. He would have liked to shoot it, or club it to death.

He slumped in the snow, looking at the buck tracks. They were snow-drifted now, old-seeming, lacking reality, as if the thing that had made them was not a tangible animal, but a shadowy phantom that would stay far ahead, out of sight, forever.

Jamie thought only briefly of quitting.

THE buck was lying in a pocket of rocks, just under the crest of the mountain. He was sheltered from the direct wind so that drifting snow whirled over the rocks and into the pocket, settling on him and around him.

Then the man smell, filtering in with the snow, brought him lurching to his feet. He stood with his three legs under him, bunched, ready to leap.

The smell came from below, indistinct and far away. It persisted for a long time, then receded until it was gone.

The buck didn't lie down again. He stood there, poised to leap. Every now and then, one ear would move forward, remain cocked for a minute, and move back again.

A nuthatch discovered the buck in his hiding place and, taking up a position on a nearby tree trunk, proceeded to tell about it. It went *yank-ank-ank-ank-ank . . . yank-ank-ank-ank-ank . . . yank-ank-ank-ank-ank.*

It was a persistent, irritating bird, but the buck paid no attention to it.

JAMIE had circled the mountain to the far side, then climbed to the crest, and now he was crouched in the lee of a rock, peering down.

He's there some place, thought Jamie, he's got to be. But there was nothing—just the bleak rocks

and the misshapen trees and the snow, and the wind that came in savage stabbing bursts. And yet there was something else, something that intruded into Jamie's mind and filled him with a queer quiet expectancy. He's there, he thought, he's got to be.

The nuthatch went *yank-ank-ank-ank-ank*—and this time Jamie heard it above the wind. The bird sees something, he sees something hiding, he sees the buck, Jamie thought. His eyes leapt to something that moved down there. He was looking at one ear and a horn . . . and then he was whispering to himself. "Don't get excited," he whispered, "Don't get excited, now. That's him all right, don't get excited, now," and felt the rising pound of his heart. "Take it easy and stop acting like an old fool," he whispered, and was thinking that if he crept just a little to the left, behind that other rock there, he would be able to see the head and neck of the buck.

Then he was doing it, with infinite caution, whispering, "Take your time, don't get excited now, take your time and make sure," feeling his heart pound like a jackhammer. Then he was behind the rock, sliding his rifle over it, cocked now, then he was raising up, whispering to the buck, "Stay there, please just stay where you are, don't get scared now, please just stay there and everything will be all right. Please please please stay there, just for a couple of seconds," and the rifle sights lined up with each other, moved to a point just below the ears, and steadied there. "Please," breathed Jamie . . . and fired.

"I guess you got him," he said out loud. "I guess that does it." He was standing up now, suddenly calm, feeling nothing, very deliberately jacking another shell into the chamber.

He could see nothing of the buck, it had simply vanished. And then, downhill from where it had been standing, a gray mass came into sight, sliding in the snow, weaving, rolling, undulating gently, bumping softly—limp and flexible as only a newly instantly-dead thing can be.

"I guess that does it," repeated Jamie, and let down the hammer of his rifle. Then he was squatting in the snow, taking out his pipe.

He was in no hurry to go down and make good his claim. He would stay here a while, and smoke, and the buck would go through its ignominious death spasms alone and unwatched. Jamie would wait until the life had gone from its eyes.

He had gone through the whole ritual. First, he had stood just a little ways off, getting that first impression of the buck as it lay on its side. Then he had gone closer, to make sure forever that it was the huge wonderful buck he had imagined. He had examined the incredible horns and counted the points—Harry had guessed right, there were 14. He had run his hands over the thick rut-swollen neck and the great chunky body, and he had smelt its pungent wild musky exciting smell.

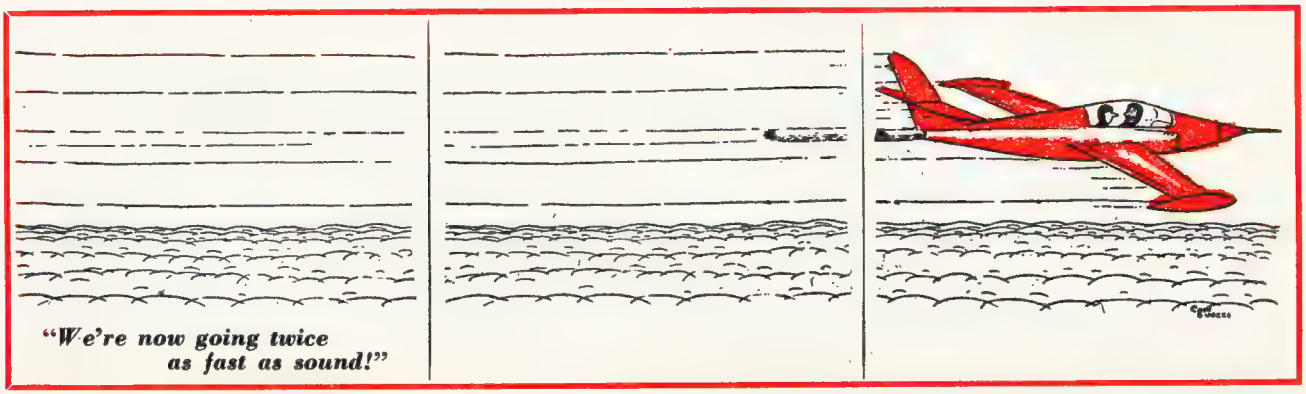
Then, after a while, he had gutted it, expertly and swiftly, and drained it, and slipped out the backstrap fillets, and put them in the snow to cool. Then he had washed himself in the snow, and lit a small fire to broil the backstraps.

And now he was sitting by the fire, the whole job done, and the buck was lying there where he could see all of it (except for the hideous hind leg, which he had covered with snow). He sat, smoking, waiting for that quiet feeling of fulfillment. But it didn't come—and Jamie knew why.

Young Harry was why. Harry should be here, and this should be Harry's buck. But Jamie had tricked him.

Then for the second time in two days, a plan of deception popped into Jamie's mind. This *was* going to be Harry's buck—Jamie was going to figure a story that would make it Harry's—he would say that after Harry left, Jamie made a fool mistake and followed the wrong track, and it wasn't till much latter that he got on the right track, and found the buck dead. Something like that. Something that would make it right to Harry, and make it Harry's buck.

And then, this problem solved, there were no other problems, and Jamie was thinking again of the great incredible buck. "You were some buck," he said. "You did fine." Then, not gloating but completely happy, he said to himself, "You did all right too, James Porter." —By Hugh Fosburgh



"We're now going twice as fast as sound!"

First issue of magazine that in 1906 became *Blue Book*.

ADVENTURES IN EDITING

BY DONALD KENNICOTT

The gentleman and scholar who was a Bluebook editor during 42 of this magazine's 50 years looks back on an exciting and distinguished career.

After a long experience in magazine editing, Burgess Johnson wrote an autobiography which he called "As Much as I Dare," taking his title from Montaigne: "I speak the truth, not so much as I would, but as much as I dare; and I dare a little more as I grow older." Ellery Sedgwick, recalling his 30 years of "adventuring in human nature" as editor of the *Atlantic*, chose "The Happy Profession" as the title for a memoir of those years. After my 42 years with Bluebook, I am inclined to think that Burgess Johnson chose the better title.

For while I have many memories of my contacts with men and women and the infinite variety of human nature revealed in their stories, I also recall that a magazine editor has to worry a lot:

He has to worry about circulation—keeping what readers he has, and getting more. He has to worry about errors in his magazine—and remembering that even a misplaced comma can reverse the meaning of a sentence, there are close to half a million facts in each and every issue that must be correct. (Standard illustrations of misplaced commas: "Senator Smith, said General Jones, is a fool." Drop out the commas, and you have: "Senator Smith said General Jones is a fool." —and perhaps a lawsuit on your hands. Or consider the law once passed in a Western state: "It shall be unlawful for any hotel, dining-room or kitchen to be used for sleeping purposes." The law had to be repealed and passed over again to correct the confusing comma the printer had dropped in after the word "hotel.") He has to worry about libel suits, "invasion of privacy" and possible copyright infringements. He has to worry about plagiarism. He has to worry about keeping to the rigid time schedule which a magazine printer has to require—and a sudden illness or a lost weekend on the part of an author or illustrator can make that very difficult.

Moreover, if an editor is worth his salt, he does not forget his responsibility, especially in wartime, to the national interest, nor his responsibility for the influence which even a magazine story may have upon the character and conduct of a reader.

Moreover, an editor has to hurt a lot of people. Out of a hundred manuscripts offered, he may be able to buy one or two. Most authors of the 90-odd scripts declined will accept their disappointment philosophically in the knowledge that it is part of the business. But it hurts just the same, for a story is a very personal thing to its author, and repeated rejections cause a few of

Sabotage explosion of Black Tom island, New York ammunition depot, helped bring the U. S. into World War I. Coded message written in a copy of Bluebook incriminated the saboteurs.

them to cherish a resentment that seems to rankle. Indeed, I have often surmised that the underlying motive of plagiarists—people who attempt to sell a story stolen from another magazine or a book—is a desire to "get even" with an editor who has failed to appreciate them.

When I reached the statutory retirement age, I had many kind letters from friends, lots of them mail-order friends whom I cherish nearly as much as first-hand acquaintances. My immediate successor also had letters of congratulation, some of them from people unknown to him or me. One of these, which he showed to me, extended best wishes, and added that there were two men in this country who in his opinion rated a good stiff punch in the teeth: one of them was Phil Wylie, and the other was Don Kennicott. I don't know the source of his grievance against Phil Wylie, or against me. I can only guess that he was one of those people whom I had had repeatedly to disappoint. And Wylie has been an editor too.

A writers' club in the West once came up with what seemed to them a bright idea, and wrote to me and other magazine editors requesting that instead of using the customary printed slip with a returned manuscript, we enclose a card with half a dozen reasons for rejections printed thereon, and the one applicable in each case checked. I told them that this could easily be misleading, for many good stories that achieve publication break half the rules in the book. The fact is that the basic reason for many rejections lies in the character of the writer, for anyone who writes for publication goes to confession. Yet it would be a far worse and wanton wounding of feelings if we were to return a manuscript saying that this story seems to us to have been written by a stupid person, or a wrong-headed person, or a person who hasn't grown up yet. Of course in the case of a story that showed real promise, we always sent a note rather than a printed slip; yet daily an editor has to hurt some people, often people who are his friends, or people trying to raise money because they are in some dire trouble.

The Original Bluebook

As I look back from my retirement lair in the Connecticut Berkshires on my 42 years with BLUEBOOK in Chicago and New York, the great change in our magazines, mostly—but not wholly—for the better, is striking. When I came on the job in that grubby little office in that grubby little building in Chicago in 1910, Karl Harriman, one girl secretary and I got out three magazines: *Red Book*, *Blue Book* and *Green Book*. (The names were later telescoped into single words). *Red Book* was an illustrated magazine printed on smooth paper, and composed entirely of short stories except for a theatrical article. BLUEBOOK also had a section devoted to the theater, printed on enameled paper, illustrated with scenes supplied by the press agents, from the new plays, and filled in with synopses of the new plays, which I wrote (with many errors, doubtless) from the New York critics' reviews. The bulk of the magazine was made up of newsprint paper, and contained short stories piled one after the other without illustrations except for "stock" headings—that is, if a story dealt with the sea, one used heading #47, the picture of a ship, and so on. *Green Book* was

devoted entirely to the theater, and included in its contents a long "novelized" version of some successful new play.

Karl's preparation for editorial work had been the University of Michigan, some newspaper experience, a published novel, and a job as advance agent for a circus—this last a real asset, for it gave him a valuable sense of showmanship. My preparation had been a degree from the University of Chicago, four years' pioneering in New Mexico when it was still a Territory, and some free-lance fiction-writing. I had sold 30 or 40 stories, and the two or three I had sold to *Red Book* and BLUEBOOK gave me my introduction to that office.

When Life Was Simpler

Karl and I had to work hard and fast six days a week. Karl bought all the material; I read all the copy and all the proof. By modern standards the magazines we got out were not very good, and yet competition was so weak that we got by. By competition, I do not mean the rivalry of other magazines, for there were some very good ones, but the competition of other interests. There were of course no radio or television; moving pictures were primitive, and there were few automobiles. It is true that most people had less leisure than they have nowadays, but they had far fewer amusements, and magazines were in great demand—so much so that we were able to refuse credit to newsdealers for the return of any unsold copies.

In saying that our magazines of 1910 were not very good, I mean that they were hastily thrown together, with little thought of display and make-up, and that printing and engraving processes were relatively crude. At that time, however, Chicago was something of a literary center. Hamlin Garland, Robert Herrick, Edwin Balmer, Henry Kitchell Webster, Ike Friedman, Carl Sandburg, Emerson Hough, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Forest Crissey and others were literary lights on the local horizon. And while not all of them wrote for us, the Chicago climate was distinctly favorable to our work, and we had some very good stories from able writers. BLUEBOOK had four stories by Mary Roberts Rinehart in 1907. And later we had excellent contributions from Sir Gilbert Parker, Courtney Ryley Cooper, James Oliver Curwood, Donn Byrne, Ellis Parker Butler, Octavus Roy Cohen (I bought his first stories), Agatha Christie, Justin Huntly McCarthy ("The Glorious Rascal," a Villon novel that preceded his more famous "If I Were King"), Rider Haggard—

Ah, that Rider Haggard novel! Our grubby little office had been replaced by the entire top floor of our own new skyscraper, and we even had a fireproof vault in which to store valuable manuscripts, drawings and records. Karl Harriman had been replaced as editor-in-chief by Ray Long, and Ray had turned over the buying for BLUEBOOK to me. The Rider Haggard novel came in from a literary agent—a fine robust Alan Quatermain story, copied in that peculiar tiny type-face Haggard affected. I was proud and delighted to buy it, and placed the precious manuscript tenderly in our new fireproof vault, along with scripts by Clarence Herbert New and others.

A day or two later I came home from a walk one evening to be met with an urgent telephone message: the office cleaning woman had detected smoke coming out from under the door of the vault; the fire department had been summoned; and I, as the only available person having the combination to the vault (Ray Long was in New York) was to come downtown at once if not sooner.

It took me a half hour to get there, however; the firemen naturally had been disinclined to let the fire, if any, burn farther; and they had gone through the wall of the vault with pickaxes. They had found that a handful of smoldering oily rags used to clean a typewriter had ignited a few adjacent papers, and easily extinguished the menace—caused, in their opinion, by spontaneous combustion of the oily rags in that airless place. But the sight that met my anxious eyes was appalling—the floor of the vault knee deep in broken concrete mixed with damp and charred cards and papers.

After a half-hour's desperate pawing through the mess, I found Rider Haggard (it may have been Sir Rider Haggard, for he was knighted about that time) and the other manuscripts intact. Breathing easier, I went out for a cup of coffee, phoned friend wife I'd be home when I got there, went back and worked till four in the morning to sort over the débris and assess the damage. And the damage was really very slight; aside from about a hundred record cards destroyed and some Cory Kilvert water colors scorched around the edges, we'd escaped without harm except for the frayed nerves of our president, our vice-president and myself.

Early copies of magazines Kennicott edited besides Bluebook. *Redbook* thrives; *Green Book*, which fictionized plays, died in 1921.

The Clarence New manuscript I've mentioned was one of an extraordinary series called "Free Lances in Diplomacy" which was published almost continuously in BLUEBOOK from 1909 until after New's death in 1933—constituting over three million words, according to the New York *Times* the longest novel ever written. His hero was an international adventurer who made a career out of foiling plots of enemy alien conspirators, usually Russians or Germans—indeed, I had a hard time to keep him from declaring fictional war on Germany from 1912 on. The stories were somewhat naïve by modern standards, but as the years went on New achieved some variety by introducing his hero's wife, son and a friend or two as alternate protagonists. Moreover, the author had two special assets: acquaintances in the British Secret Service who apparently tipped him off to impending situations before they came to public knowledge, though because of the time-lag between writing and publication, we in the office were more conscious of this than the public. His second great asset was an adventurous young manhood in many far corners of the world; in 1880, on a voyage around the world in an old clipper ship, he was shipwrecked off the coast of Australia, and in spite of a broken arm, managed to keep afloat for five hours. After his rescue, he rode more than a thousand miles through the Australian bush country, and was wounded when natives attacked a sheep station where he'd camped. Later, after a tiger-hunting trip, his ship caught fire and had to be beached on the coast of Australia.

As a result of all this, New's descriptions of remote places were always accurate. And to the best of my recollection, only twice in all the 25 years did he fail to deliver his manuscript each month; once when his wife died, and once when an ungrateful Russian she-bear in Brooklyn's Prospect Park Zoo repaid the lump of sugar he had given her every Sunday morning by catching his coat-sleeve in her claw and pulling his arm within reach of her jaws. After the loss of his arm, however, our undaunted author rigged a wire from the shift key of his typewriter to his foot, and continued to type his own stories with one hand. What a grand time New and his "Free Lances" would have had with the international set-up today!

Early Science Fiction

Another popular writer whose work appeared in BLUEBOOK for over 25 years was Edgar Rice Burroughs, whose Tarzan novels were first serialized in BLUEBOOK in 1916 and continued at frequent intervals until 1938. While his stories leaned far more heavily on the imagination than Haggard's, they both capitalized the fact that much of Africa was then unknown; and in spite of reports from Livingston, Stanley, du Chaillu and others, it was not difficult to achieve the willing suspension of disbelief that enabled a reader to enjoy them. Of late years, of course, largely through the far prowlings of our airplanes, this earth is all too well-known. As late as 1936 I risked a novel based on an imaginary oasis in the Arctic warmed by hot springs—"Hawk of the Wilderness," by William Chester—but the wonder of the unknown world has indeed all gone now. Indeed, I think this has accounted for the vogue of so-called science fiction: with no place on the earth left for exploration and new-discovered wonders, we have jumped the humdrum track of reality to venture into space beyond the stars.

A Saboteur Used Bluebook

The year after Burrough's bow in BLUEBOOK, the first World War began; and one copy of our January 1917 issue became internationally famous, for across four pages of "The Yukon Trail," a novel by William McLeod Raine (he died only a few months ago) one of the German *saboteurs* responsible for the dreadful Black Tom explosion had written an incriminating message in "invisible" ink. However, it didn't come to light until years afterward. If it had, we would probably have entered the war sooner, for American tempers were then already close to the boiling point.

I recall an interesting sidelight on that. In February, just after Germany had again declared unrestricted submarine warfare, Peter B. Kyne and his wife happened to be in town, and Ray Long gave a dinner for them. The conversation among the dozen guests turned, like most conversations then, on whether or not we should go into the war. Nearly everyone expressed the opinion that we emphatically were not too proud to fight, and should at once throw in our weight. And then Peter Kyne spoke up. "Look here," he said, "how many of you men have ever been in a battle?" There was a silence, for none of us had, and Peter went on: "Well, I have—in the Philippines. It makes you sick to your stomach. I don't want us to get into any war." And yet when a couple of months later war did come, Peter Kyne was the only man of those present who could or did join up. I'll never forget him as he strode into my office that day and told me, with his special gift for a picturesque phrase: "Yes, I've had experience in the Philippines, and I've got a lot of insurance, so I reckon I'm worth just as much to Mrs. Kyne dressed as on the hoof."

That first World War had much less impact on the magazine than the second, partly because the need for strict censorship was not so well realized, partly because our involvement in it was over much sooner. Herbert Stoops, who was then drawing heading pictures for us, went to officers' training camp and then overseas—and sent a few drawings which we used as frontispieces. Robert Casey, Frank R. Adams and some other good contributors were, like Peter Kyne, lost to us for a year or two, so that we were sometimes hard-pressed to find good material. We did, however, have an excellent series of fiction war stories by Edwin Balmer, some war-

dog stories by Albert Payson Terhune, and other notable contributions.

The increasing importance of motion pictures had by now largely confined popular interest in the theater to New York. The theatrical section in BLUEBOOK had been abandoned for some time, and an attempt to substitute a moving-picture section didn't work out. *Green Book* was given up as a theatrical magazine; for a time we tried to convert it to a magazine devoted to the interests of professional women, but there were not many career girls then; and in the minor depression of 1921 *Green Book* gave up the ghost.

It was about this time that I had an experience with the plagiarism worry that provided a laugh. A new literary agent set up in business. I'll call him John Smith, though the name he used was much fancier. The group of stories he sent us was surprisingly good, but one of them rang a bell in my head. After some days of memory-searching I was able to run down that story—a copy, word for word except the title, of a story that had appeared in the old John Brisbane Walker *Cosmopolitan*. I wrote to "Smith" in protest, and his reply was very apologetic—he was at fault for not looking up the writer more carefully, and so on. From some collateral evidence, however, I was pretty sure that Smith was trying to make a business of this sort of theft, protecting himself under his screen as an agent.

Sinclair Lewis was in Chicago that year, and I had luncheon with him at the Cliff Dwellers Club now and then. One day I told him about this agent and he was much interested. "Oh, yes," he told me, "I had my experience with that fellow." It seemed that early in his career Lewis had for a time been Associate Editor of *Adventure*, under the able leadership of Arthur Sullivant Hoffman. They worked in a big room, Hoffman's desk in one corner, Lewis' in the other. One day our literary crook had called Lewis up with a bright idea—namely that in returning unavailable manuscripts, Lewis write the author saying that this would be a perfectly salable story if it only had the professional touch, and that one John Smith, of such and such an address, was admirably qualified to supply it for a modest fee—and they would then split the take.

Lewis said this made him so furious that he burst out over the phone: "Why, you blankety, blankety so-and-so." Whereupon Hoffman, not knowing who this was or what it was about, looked up from his desk: "Why—why, don't stop, Lewis. Call him a———. Call him this, and that, and the other thing." Between them they achieved a really volcanic vocabulary of invective.

One special source of editorial concern was for many years peculiar to BLUEBOOK: In 1925, sensing a turning of public attention toward stories of fact, we advertised to our readers that we would pay a hundred dollars each for the five best stories of real experience sent in each month—"What was the most exciting event in your life? Tell us about it in 2,000 words or less."

These stories began to come to us in increasing numbers—from soldiers and sailors, from professional adventurers and soldiers of fortune—and of course from professional liars, too. One evening at dinner after I had recounted to my wife one such yarn that had come to me that day, she looked across the table at me with that kindly, appraising smile which good wives employ, and commented: "I caught me a wild boy; now he lives a quiet suburban life, and the wild men come in and tell him about the outside world."

Life in the Woolly West

I will digress to explain that the "wild boy" characterization was probably a reference to the 800-mile horseback ride from northwestern Colorado to southwestern New Mexico I had taken with my brother in 1903 in search of the ranch which had been prescribed for him, and to my four years in New Mexico when it was still a Territory developing a couple of claims into a real ranch. It was not really very wild, however; except for a few isolated episodes, the West has not really been wild since the Seventies.

Indeed, the experience may have been an editorial handicap to me later, for I found it hard to buy the bang-bang Western stories that still seem to be in favor with some people. One of the proud moments of my life occurred when my brother and I rode tired and dusty into Durango, Colorado. I

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had a little hunting rifle, a Savage 30.30, in a scabbard under my leg—observing which, the town marshal took it away from me and put it in escrow in a saloon. I could have it back when I left town. I was kid enough to be tickled pink to be taken for a tough character; my brother, who was older, was a bit annoyed. But the episode gives you the picture; at that time, at least, you would not carry a gun in any Western town; it wasn't manners, and it wasn't permitted. Since then, of course, the cowboys have been to the movies, and some Western towns are not insensitive to the tourist appeal of a little Wild West décor.

Hunters and fishermen also sent in a good many stories, but most of them were routine and better suited to the audience of a sports magazine. A few were special, however. Sascha Siemel sent us in 1934 what was probably his first account of hunting and killing a jaguar with a spear. Another odd one was Jack Abernathy, a Texan who had developed a technique of running down wolves on horseback, and capturing the beasts alive seizing them by the jaw, back of the teeth, with his hand. A photograph sent in corroboration showed his friend Theodore Roosevelt standing by while he held up a captured wolf by the jaw. Another weird one was from a man who, driving a truck on a jungle road, encountered a gigantic python. The huge reptile showed fight; he undertook to run it down with the truck, and a terrific battle ensued until, after some 20 desperate passes, the truck finally won. This interest in wild animals, which I think many men share, led us also to take on a number of narratives from circus animal trainers.

Among many famed authors appearing regularly in Bluebook's pages was the late Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Peril in a Captive Balloon

Keeping in mind the old saying, "It is a portion of probability that many improbable things will happen," we sometimes printed stories that in their naked outline seem rather tall, but which had a quality of sincerity in narration that made them sound credible. A case in point was the story of a man training for the balloon service in England during the first World War. With two or three companions, he was aboard a captive balloon when it broke loose and went scudding across country. Not very high, they dropped overboard the "trail rope" used in making landings, in the hope that it would catch on something. It did—on a "goods train" chugging northward. Towed thus for a long distance, they were terrified anew to see the engine ahead of them disappear into a tunnel. However, nothing happened, for the rope broke when it hit the arch of the tunnel, and shortly afterward they grounded safely and disembarked—after reviving one of the men who had fainted from the reaction. Sounds like a thundering movie thriller, but because of the simple sincerity and lack of dramatics in the telling, I believed it; and so far as I know, the readers did too.

These stories of real experience kept coming in—from the Rangers and Forest Service men, from war correspondents and city newspaper men, from policemen and doctors and lawyers, miners and farmers and factory workers—all sorts and conditions of men who might or might not be expected to live dangerously. Some of these contributors, like Leland Jamieson, began a successful writing man's career in this way. And there were some already noted names among them. General Smedley Butler of the Marines gave us several exciting episodes from his adventurous career. Admiral Byrd contributed a splendid piece on his Antarctic exploration. And four of the Arctic explorers—Stefansson, Sir Hubert Wilkins, Burt McConnell and Matt Henson (who accompanied Perry to the Arctic) each contributed one or more stories.

Later we expanded this idea to include a number of much longer autobiographies which had to be published serially. Charles Brower, who for 50 years ran a whaling station and trading post at Point Barrow, the northernmost spot in Alaska, gave us his life story, "The Land of the Long Night." He was then the only living man who had hunted the great bowhead whale while with the

Eskimos, using their primitive weapons and techniques, and his record forms a real contribution to history and anthropology.

Captain Dixon, a Canadian skipper who had sailed the Seven Seas for 35 years, gave us "A Million Miles in Sail." He wrote in what might be called a "debunking" mood. He had crossed the equator 35 times on the Atlantic and 16 times on the Pacific, and had kept records for the British Meteorological office. The highest temperature he had ever recorded at sea on the equator was 80 degrees; the highest anywhere at sea was 86 degrees, north of Borneo!

Mickey Walker, the middleweight pugilist, gave us a story of his ring career that ran through several issues. For contrast I may mention the autobiography of André Maurois, the French writer, "Memoirs of a Difficult Life." I myself most enjoyed Bill Adams' moving record "My Life at Sea." His father had said to him when he first sailed: "You'll find it a hard life, my son." It proved a life hard indeed, but he concluded his record characteristically: "Who'd ask it easy?"

In 1927 Edwin Balmer came on the job as editor of *Red Book*. The relationship between the two magazines continued close for some years after that, and I did some work for *Red Book* as its associate editor until 1944 or so; but after 1927 I was allowed to paddle my own canoe with BLUEBOOK, and no longer had to absorb an occasional reject from the *Red Book* inventory. Then in July 1929 came a big change: the McCall Corporation bought *Red Book* and BLUEBOOK from the Chicago owners, and Mr. Balmer and I, with one or two others, were moved to New York along with the magazines. We now had our own printing and engraving plants instead of having to work with outside people. And the fact that most of the literary agents, book-publishers and illustrators were located in New York was an added advantage.

In 1930 we carried out a long-cherished plan to enlarge the magazine to its present size, but in doing it I worked myself into a serious illness that sent me to the hospital and kept me away from the office for four months; then when the Depression caught up with us, it seemed best to reef our sails before the storm, and in 1932 we cut our price to 15 cents and went back to the old smaller size.

Long-Lived Collision

The next year BLUEBOOK profited by something very special in what has come to be known as science fiction. Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie in collaboration contributed a novel that still after 20 years enjoys a book sale—"When Worlds Collide." A year or two later they followed it with a sequel, "After Worlds Collide," and within the last few years these have enjoyed a good run as a Technicolor movie. The vogue for this sort of thing seemed to increase with the years, and we continued to offer fiction of this very special type in nearly

A dramatic cover from World War II days. A special edition went out to servicemen overseas.

every issue, much of it by the inimitable Nelson Bond, and some by Robert Heinlein and others.

In September of 1941 the magazine was enlarged to its present format, and the change seemed to attract readers, for circulation climbed at once. The increasing specialization in magazines as well as in other aspects of American life led us to label BLUEBOOK as a man's magazine, though I have reason to believe it still attracted a share of women readers. Perhaps unwisely, I did not extend this specialization to an editorial staff, but continued to run a one-man show and do my own art editing, for I had quite an acquaintance among illustrators, and felt that there were compensations for whatever shortcomings my lack of technical training as an artist might cause. For I thus retained a viewpoint closer to that of the reader; and each item in the book was a unified projection of an idea. Indeed, I was sometimes influenced in the decision on a manuscript by the knowledge that it would, or would not, give a particular artist a good opportunity. . . . Moreover, a great loss in my personal life urged and enabled me to devote my whole life and thought to the magazine.

Came the Second World War, and with it new problems, for with 12 or 14 million men in the service, our sources of material were curtailed. We discontinued serials, for although we got out an overseas edition for the armed forces, it was necessarily reduced in size and content, and many readers were moved about so frequently and suddenly

that we couldn't expect them to follow one story from month to month. We likewise discontinued the Real Experience department, for the terrific events overseas made peacetime adventures seem tame and pallid, and censorship forbade printing much timely material about the war as it was being fought.

Trouble with the Censors

For the most part our relations with the censors were good. Only once did I receive a call-down—this because of something in a fiction story about an episode off the Canadian coast. When I sent a photostat of the Canadian censor's okay, they changed their attitude, but apparently they took it up with the Canadian censor, for he asked to see the script again, then returned it with thanks but no comment, so I never did learn what the shooting was about. We were supposed to censor our own fiction, but now and then I asked for a visa on some fiction story dealing with a tender subject. A novel with most of its scenes laid aboard an aircraft carrier went to the censor for this reason, and he saved me embarrassment by pointing out that the author had erred in having the commander of the carrier make a flight—his duty, as I should myself have realized, is to his ship, and (on the record, at least) he stays on her except in port. The difficulty was easily fixed by changing the job of that particular character.

Another encounter with the censors is of rather special interest. In May, 1945, Phil Wylie's agent sent me a novelette based on an imaginary German attack on us with an atom bomb in 1960. I didn't know for certain that we were ourselves readying an atom bomb, but we had received a directive telling us to avoid mention of heavy water and certain other items, that enabled me to have some idea of what was in the offing. I sent it at once to our censors, who returned it with a long letter explaining that because every fact in the story had in one form or another been printed before, they could not forbid its publication, *but* they would be a lot happier if we didn't print it, because they thought it so good that it was likely to start a wave of such stories, and sooner or later someone would disclose something important. There was only one answer to that, of course, but next day an official appeared asking for the addresses of Wylie and his agent—presumably to make sure the story was not offered elsewhere. . . . Months later, the afternoon of the day that President Truman announced the bombing of Hiroshima, the censor wrote me to clear Wylie's story, and I got it into the first issue I could, October. So far as I could learn, it caused no special stir—I suppose because it seemed something of an anticlimax after the tremendous fact.

With the war over at last, the now-it-can-be-told idea was for a time dominant. Richard Kelly, a Navy officer who had served with O.S.S. and had access to some of the records, contributed a dozen or so accounts of O.S.S. exploits that elicited a letter of praise from its commander, General Donovan. For sheer cold two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage, these lone nighttime parachute drops behind the enemy lines were remarkable. Another fine now-it-can-be-told series was made up of 15 records of submarine patrols in enemy waters, some contributed by Admiral Christie and others, but the majority by Commander Beach—now the President's naval aide. Admiral Oldendorf gave us "Big Gun Fleet," the story of the Suriago Strait battle, probably the last naval action to be decided by gunfire; and we had sundry other Navy records, including a very interesting series about the hazardous jobs of the underwater demolition teams in the Pacific, by Edgar Higgins with Dean Phillips.

With no wish to slight the Army, we found it not easy to report their great effort, for the operations were on so vast a scale, with so many units integrated, that an individual impression was difficult to convey. We did, however, have a story of the Bulge action by Colonel Dupuy of General Eisenhower's staff. Colonel Graves of the 517th Airborne, gave us the story of his outfit, and because it was a separate regiment not attached to any division, this record made a unit in itself and could be published as such. Robert Bliss in "Close Combat" projected the infantry battle picture from a private's viewpoint, and Captain John Beach from that of a line officer. And even before the end of the war, we had a number of picture spreads of the air war from our artist Hamilton Greene.

Trained for Suicide

Perhaps the most remarkable of our fact war stories, "The Autobiography of a Kamikaze Pilot," came to us only in 1951, when Richard Neville, son of an American consul stationed in Japan years before, brought in his boyhood playmate Yukihiza Suzuki. As an American Air Force officer, Neville had helped bomb Tokyo; Suzuki had been trained as a Kamikaze pilot in the Japanese air force, but we had dropped the atom bomb before it came his turn to commit suicide. Suzuki was in 1951 studying at the University of Michigan (and majoring in American history!) and had written a very long account of his Kamikaze training, out of which we were able with some difficulty to cut three articles that shed real illumination on this fantastic, dedicated and dangerous threat to our ships.

One short wartime fiction story by Fred Schiller won special prominence. The scene of this story, "Ten Men and a Prayer," was Cassino, that bitter battle in the vicinity of an Italian monastery. A Jewish boy had been killed, and comrades of his faith wished to give him an orthodox funeral. For one ritual prayer in this service 10 persons are required, but there were only nine Jews remaining in the outfit, and to solve the difficulty, they set up a statue of Christ which had been knocked down in

the monastery as the tenth Jew. I bought and printed the story because I thought it packed a wallop, but was surprised as well as pleased to learn that it had won second prize in a contest sponsored by the Bureau of Intercultural relations for the best magazine stories calculated to promote good interfaith relations. The first prize went to the novel "Gentleman's Agreement," by Laura Hobson, serialized in *Cosmopolitan.*

Canada gave us a postwar headache by a regulation forbidding the importation of magazines containing more than 50% fiction. Most of the better American magazines were not affected by this, as advertisements were counted in reckoning the non-fiction content. BLUEBOOK, however, with no advertising, was on the spot, for we ran about 25% articles and 75% fiction. Reluctant to lose our Canadian friends, I put all our articles in the front of the book, had a portion of the first 96 pages bound separately and offered at a reduced price in Canada. Many Canadian readers wrote in protest, but enough bought the smaller book to justify the move. I and most Canadian readers, however, were very glad when their government relented, and we were again able to offer the complete magazine north of the border.

Came the Korean War, and Major Simmons of the Marines, who had taken part in the Inchon landing and the subsequent difficult retreat in the north, sent us some vivid stories of this bitter warfare—in which he himself won a Silver Star and a Purple Heart. The Marine Corps censor in Washington was rather tough with these, but even as pruned they were very good. Once this censor caused me some perplexity by cutting out the identity of Simmons' battalion, but leaving in references to Sergeant Lee of Item Company, Sergeant Turner of George Company, and so on.

Hamilton Greene, whose illustrations had appeared in BLUEBOOK for many years, was very anxious to go to Korea as our correspondent. I hesitated, but inasmuch as he had caught a bullet through the stomach doing the same thing in Germany, I figured he knew what he was getting into; and when he promised not to stick his neck out, I arranged with Washington to have him accredited, and we provided transportation. He sent us some excellent articles from the front, and many lively authentic drawings—usually shipped rolled up in a 57-mm. shell-case. From the content of these articles and drawings it was very apparent that he had promptly forgotten his promise not to stick his neck out; and I was much relieved that Christmas Eve of 1951 to learn that he was home again all in one piece. . . .

Eheu fugaces! Perhaps after all it was a happy profession. For oft on a stilly Berkshire night, I sigh through my long white beard, and long for the light of other days. . . . Selah.

—BY DONALD KENNICOTT

wordly wise

BULL'S-EYE

Outlawed in 1835, bull-baiting was long a contender for the position of England's national sport. Lords and ladies, as well as common folk, considered it great fun to watch vicious dogs try to "pin" a big animal by pulling his nose to the ground.

Part of the popularity of the sport was due to the fact that it was an ideal medium for gambling. Since animals were the principals, a "fix" was almost impossible. Depending upon whether he liked the looks of the dogs or the bull, a sportsman would place his bet. If he wished to back the bull, he might remark that he was putting his money on the bull's eye—just as present-day enthusiasts may place their money on the "nose" of a horse.

One of the most common wagers was one crown, or five shillings. So frequently was the crown placed on a bull's eye that the coin itself came to be termed "bull's eye." Perhaps the transition was made easier by the fact that it was approximately the same diameter as the eye of a big animal.

After the development of target-shooting with firearms, it became customary to indicate the center of the target by a small black spot. This spot varied in size, but was roughly equivalent to that of a crown-piece, or bull's eye. So the name of the coin transferred to the spot and by 1825 the center of any target, regardless of its size, was being called a *bull's-eye.*

—BY WEBB GARRISON

The Deep End

BY TIMOTHY FULLER

As the luxury cruiser drove through the night five people had motives for murder. And before another sunset, one had struck.

DETECTIVE ROWAN, a big man with reddish hair going gray, came into my room about 11 o'clock that morning. He had on a green sport shirt that hung out over light blue gabardine slacks.

"You're Harry Snow?" he asked. "Captain of the *Sealark?*"

"That's right," I said.

He told me who he was and asked if I was ready to talk about what had happened.

"Where do you want me to start?"

"Suit yourself," he said and pulled up a chair by my bed.

"Well, we were anchored for the night in Rockport Harbor. We'd fished Ipswich Bay all day for tuna but hadn't hit anything. About half past 10 Mr. Walker decided to cross over to Cape Cod and try for stripers in the morning. Striped bass, that is."

A Bluebook Novelette

"How long a trip would that be?"

"About 50 miles. We were doing between 12 and 15 knots."

"Calm sea?"

I nodded. "There was a little ground swell but hardly any wind at all."

"Walker was alone on the flying bridge?"

"Yes."

"Would you call him an experienced sailor?"

"Yes."

Rowan got up and poured himself a glass of ice water from the pitcher beside my bed. "Hot day," he said. "How do you feel?"

"I'm okay," I told him.

"Then just keep talking."

He was quite a policeman.

It had been hot all day and by half past 10 that night it was still so hot no one felt like going below to sleep. We were all in the deckhouse watching the night ball game on television when Walker said, "Let's take a run down to the Cape tonight and see if we can hit the stripers in the morning. What do you say?"

"How early in the morning?" Pell asked. "I'm on vacation."

"Early," said Walker. "That's the best time."

"Anything you say, Dave," Lucas said.

"Nick?"

She was tilted back in a deck chair with her long, lovely legs stretched out in front of her. "Splendid," she said. "You can have your tuna. Stripers are my meat."

"Okay, then," Walker said and looked at me. "Get up the hook, Cap."

I'd been on the *Sealark* six weeks. She was a 50-foot, twin-diesel, rich man's toy but in spite of her sky blue hull, chrome fittings, television set and general elegance she was a sturdy boat in a blow.

When I went back after stowing the anchor the three men were up on the flying bridge and Nick was alone in the deckhouse gathering up the glasses and beer bottles on a silver tray.

"Always on the go, Harry," she said.

"It suits me," I said.

She wore her hair parted in the middle and pulled back tight over her ears. With that black hair, deep tan and high checkbones she looked like a beautiful Indian. She was really Irish-Italian. Her name had been Nicola O'Keefe and she'd worked as a secretary in Walker's office. She was 26, a good 20 years younger than her husband, and they'd been married two years.

"I'll clean up this stuff," I told her. "Don't bother with it."

"I can manage," she said. "Tell me something, Harry, how are all your girls?"

"Very sad," I said. "When I go off like this on a trip it practically kills them."

"I can imagine."

I was in love with her and, to get her off my mind, I'd been dating a lot of different girls ashore. It hadn't worked at all.

"You ought to get married and settle down, Harry," she said.

"That's right, Nick," I said. "I'd like that."

We'd had three hurried, half-kidding conversations like this in the last two weeks. After the first one I'd wanted to quit my job or come straight out with the way I felt about her. But I hadn't done either one.

Over our heads Walker was moving the spotlight around, picking out the channel markers as he eased the boat out of the harbor.

"What kind of a girl have you got in mind?"

"Well, I'm never going to get rich so I'll have to find one who doesn't care about money."

"You may have to look a long time."

"Maybe not so long," I said. "In another year I'll have enough saved up to buy the boat I want. I've been saving for five years. Ever since I got out of the Navy."

"What will your wife do when you're off with your parties fishing?"

"That would depend. If she liked to fish and was good at it I might take her along as mate. Until we started to raise a family."

"You've got it well worked out, haven't you?"

"I've done some thinking about it. You can't leave everything to chance."

"I suppose you're right about that," she said, "but sometimes I think it's good business to gamble."

Just then Lucas came walking down from the flying bridge.

"I believe I shall take myself to bed," he announced. He was a tall, slow-moving man in his 60's.

"Me, too," said Nick and picked up her tray. "Good night, Harry."

I said good night to them both and went up on top.

Lucas and Pell had come aboard that morning in Marblehead where the Walkers had a summer place and where the *Sealark* was moored. They each owned a shoe factory and, since Walker was in the leather business, they weren't just aboard for the fishing.

When Walker saw me he said, "I'll take her for an hour or two, Cap. Go down and grab yourself some rest. I'll call you when I get sleepy."

"Okay, Mr. Walker," I said.

"Do you get double time for night work, Cap?" Pell asked me.

"He sleeps all week when we're not aboard," Walker said. "Right, Harry?"

Illustrated by BILL DRAUT

"Sure," I said. "I pity you people who have to work for a living."

"Do you think you'll ever amount to anything, Cap?" Pell said.

He was a card. He'd started pegging away at the beer before noon and was feeling very mellow. Twice during the afternoon Lucas' Panama hat had blown over the side and we'd had to reel in the fishing lines to go back for it. The second time I'd hauled it aboard Pell had stood up out of the fighting chair with a belaying pin in his hand. It was a heavy cast iron one Walker had picked up somewhere to knock out the fish we caught. "Here!" Pell had yelled, waving the pin at Lucas' hat. "Let's kill that thing once and for all!"

Like Walker, Pell was a short stocky man in his late 40's. All day they'd been riding each other pretty hard.

"Harry is saving up to buy a yacht," Walker said. "A couple of years in the charter business and he'll retire."

"Why don't you retire, Dave?" Pell asked him. "What do you want out of life—money?"

"I've got more money right now than you'll ever see, Fatso," Walker said.

Pell shook his head and jabbed me in the ribs. "Tell me something, Harry. What does a beautiful young girl like Nick see in old beer belly, here?"

I didn't say anything and I saw Walker's hands tighten up on the wheel.

"What's your wife up to these days, Romeo?" Walker asked.

It was getting too rough for me. Pell's wife was in Nevada getting a divorce.

I WENT forward and sat by the hatch until we were past Cape Ann. It was a beautiful August night. There was no moon but it was so clear you could almost see by the stars. Our wake was sparkling with phosphorous.

I wondered about Nick and what I ought to do about her, but I couldn't think of an answer. I'd been brought up to believe marriage was a sacred thing and I never had any use for anyone who didn't respect it. But I also thought I ought to give myself a chance with her. I hated the sneaking backstairs way we were beginning to talk together but I had to make sure she hated it too.

I knew money had been one of the reasons she'd married Walker but I couldn't believe it was the only one. He'd started with nothing, he'd been shrewd and worked hard for what he had, but he was like a child about all his possessions. "Everything I have is the best," was one of his favorite expressions. I guess he considered Nick was the best of them all. I had an idea she had wanted to make him see how much more there was in life than new cars and fancy boats and a handsome wife to show off to people. Maybe not, though.

Just before I went below I looked aft and could see Walker up there alone on the flying bridge. I remember I wondered what he was thinking about.

So you woke up," Rowan said.

"That's right. The boat was rolling and at first I couldn't figure it out. Then I knew we must be getting ground swell in shallow water. I ran up on deck and saw we were practically up on the beach."

Rowan sipped his ice water. "Pretty lucky thing you woke up when you did, wasn't it?"

I nodded. "That's the way it was, though. I ran back to the wheel and took her off and then I looked around trying to figure out where we were."

"Where were you?"

"About eight miles south of Scituate Harbor. That put us 30 miles west of Race Point on the tip of Cape Cod where we were headed. By then I figured Walker must have slipped over the side coming forward to wake me up. I went below and woke them all up and then . . ."

"Hold it," Rowan said. "Lucas and Pell shared the main cabin and Mrs. Walker had the stateroom aft. Is that right?"

"Yes."

"Who did you wake up first?"

"Mrs. Walker."

"Was the door to her cabin closed?"

"Yes."

"Did you knock?"

"No. Right then I was in a hurry."

"How did you wake her? Did you call out or shake her or what?"

"I don't remember exactly. I guess I said, 'Wake up, Nick.' Something like that. I turned on the light."

"You always called Mrs. Walker by her first name?"

"Yes."

"But not Mr. Walker?"

"No."

"Okay, we'll get to that in a minute. As far as you know Mrs. Walker was asleep?"

"As far as I know they were all asleep."

"Tell me this. Did you think there was much chance of finding Walker alive out there?"

"I thought there was a chance."

"Much of a chance?"

"No. Not much of a chance."

"How did you get along with Walker?"

"We got along all right."

"And Mrs. Walker?"

"I was in love with Mrs. Walker."

Rowan finished off the glass of water and put it back on the table. "What does that mean?" he asked. "Were you two playing around together?"

I knew I shouldn't get mad. Rowan was doing his job and maybe part of his job was to get me mad. "No," I said. "Nothing like that."

"Well, I'd like to know how it was between

you," he said. "Did she ever come aboard when Walker wasn't there?"

"No. Never."

"Did you ever meet her ashore?"

"No."

"You just admired her from afar? Was that it?"

"Not exactly. I thought I might have some chance with her."

"You don't have Walker's money but you're a young good-looking guy and that might make up for it?"

"You can put it that way if you want."

"Look, Snow," he said. "I don't want to put it any way it wasn't."

"It was up in the air," I said. "I was ready to quit my job and ask her to marry me. That was the only way I wanted it."

"All right. If he drowned that solved your problem, didn't it?"

"Maybe."

"And you still did your best to find him?"

I was mad now and he knew it. "Yes," I said. "I did my best to find him."

WHEN I turned on the light, Nick sat up and pushed the hair out of her eyes.

"What is it, Harry?"

"Mr. Walk . . . Dave's overboard. A long time. We're way the hell off course. I just . . ."

"Oh, no," she said. "Oh, no, Harry."

"He must've slipped coming forward."

She had both hands up at the side of her head. "Coast Guard. Have you called the Coast Guard yet?"

"Right away. I'll do that right away."

She got out of bed. "How long has it been?"

"It must be a long time, Nick. Maybe three hours."

"He can't still be alive," she said.

"Sure he can. A man can stay up a long time in calm water."

"All right," she said. "Let's get going then."

I don't believe I was in the main cabin 10 seconds. When I snapped on the overhead light Mr. Lucas opened his eyes.

"Walker's overboard," I told him. "We're going back to look for him."

"Very well," he said, but he looked as worried as he ought to have been.

Pell was still asleep. I knew Lucas would tell him what had happened so I ran up to the deckhouse. Nick was already there. She was barefoot and had a trench coat over her pajamas.

I gunned the *Sealark* up as far as she'd go and put her on a course that would take us back about 12 miles off Cape Ann. It was just a guess but I figured Walker must have gone over about there.

"Take her now," I said to Nick. "Keep her the way she is."

I got the Coast Guard on the ship-to-shore telephone and they said they'd get boats out right away from Gloucester and Provincetown, and planes from Salem as soon as it got light. They also told me they'd alert what shipping they could raise in the area. It was 10 minutes to three in the morning.

Pell came up, a pair of pants pulled over his pajamas, his hair all messed up.

"How long is it going to take us to get back there, Harry?" Nick asked.

"An hour and a half anyway."

"An hour and a half!" Pell said. "How long has he been gone?"

I explained to him where we were and how I figured where Walker must be.

Lucas had got himself dressed. He had on a light summer business suit with a dark blue sport shirt buttoned up at the neck. He even had on his Panama hat.

Nick was standing beside me and Lucas came up and patted her shoulder. "We'll get him, my dear," he told her.

"We can hope," she said.

We ran into fog on the way out. When we came into it Lucas had gone down to shave and Nick was below making coffee. Pell finally noticed the drops on the windshield.

"What is that, Harry, rain?" he asked.

"Fog."

"This is all we need," he said.

"It should burn off when the sun gets at it," I told him.

"You don't really think he's still up out there do you, Harry?"

"I don't know," I said. "Mr. Walker keeps in pretty good condition. In this kind of water, if he doesn't lose his head, he might make it."

"It must be one hell of an experience to drop off like that and see the boat going away from you," he said.

I nodded.

NICK noticed the fog right away when she came up with the coffee. It was just beginning to get light. She poured me a cup and set it on the shelf beside the wheel.

"How are you going to operate in this?" she asked.

"The same as if it was night," I told her. "We'll have to listen for him. With no wind we should be able to hear him a quarter of a mile away. We'll cut the engines, blast the horn, and listen for 20 seconds. Then we'll run her full for 45 seconds before we stop again."

"I'll take it now," she said. "Drink your coffee."

She was dressed in a sweater and shorts and had fixed her hair, but she hadn't bothered to put on any lipstick. Just about then was when I got

to wondering what might happen to us if Walker was dead. It was a terrible way to be thinking with a man out there trying to keep his head above water.

When we started to make our runs Lucas stayed down in the deckhouse in case anything came in on the phone and Nick, Pell and I went up on the flying bridge. It was full daylight but the fog had shut down to 50 yards.

Once, after the sun was up, a helicopter went over so close we were ready to duck but we couldn't even see it. I felt happier about my navigation after that, though. It meant we were on the line between the two capes.

Pell was keeping a record of our runs on a piece of paper and he had 37 of them marked down when we heard the horn way off to starboard. We answered it and came back again and I went over, thinking it might be the Coast Guard.

She was a little black ketch under 30 feet long. There wasn't enough wind to fill her sails and I could just make out four men in her cockpit when I cut the motors to hail her. One of them was standing up.

"Good morning, *Sealark!*" he called.

It was Walker.

Pell swore and Nick gave a little laugh that was almost a sob. I waved. . . . It was Lucas down in the deckhouse who asked what had happened.

ROWAN was sitting backwards in his chair beside my bed. "You were surprised to see him?"

"What do you think?"

"I'm just asking the questions, Snow. Were you surprised?"

"Yes."

"Pleased?"

"Yes."

"How about Lucas and Pell and Mrs. Walker?"

"I wasn't paying too much attention to them right then. I'd say all of us were surprised and pleased to see him."

"That isn't possible, is it?"

"No."

"But as far as you could tell everyone was surprised and pleased?"

"That's right."

"What about this sailboat?"

Detective Rowan poured himself a glass of ice water. "Just keep talking," he ordered me.

"She was the *Polly* out of Westport, Connecticut. Three college boys had her under a two-week charter. They were headed down east. Toward the Maine coast."

"What did Walker say?"

"He told us he'd slipped on the deck going forward and hit his head on a stanchion. It stunned him and when he stood up he lost his balance and pitched over the side."

"What's a stanchion?"

"A metal post which holds the lifelines that run around the deck."

"He showed you the lump on his head?"

"Yes."

"How long had he been in the water before the sailboat picked him up?"

"About two hours."

"Swimming all that time?"

"No. He didn't start to swim until he saw the *Polly's* running lights. There wasn't much wind to speak of and he was able to get close enough to hail her."

"You accepted Walker's story without any question?"

"I didn't have any reason to doubt it."

"You just thought he was lucky?"

"I thought he was about the luckiest guy that ever lived."

"Yeah," Rowan said. I couldn't tell what he was thinking.

WHEN Walker called to us I let the *Sealark* slide in close and then stopped her with the engines.

Walker looked up. "What kept you, Cap?"

I knew he was putting on a show for everyone so I said, "I guess I overslept, Mr. Walker."

The college boys laughed and Walker told me to get some bumpers out and bring her in alongside. That was when he told us what had happened.

Walker was in a pair of dungarees and a black wool sweater with the numerals 1956 across his chest. He had thick gray hair cut short on the top, gray eyes, and a square chin with a long scar across it he'd got in a racing-car accident. He tipped his head to one side to show us the bump on his head.

He didn't kiss Nick when he came aboard.

"Better get on some lipstick," he told her. "I've invited the boys over for breakfast."

He hurried into the deckhouse then to call the Coast Guard and thank them for their trouble. When I finished getting the boats together so they wouldn't chafe I went up there.

"Break out some champagne for everyone, Cap," he said when I came in. "This is a celebration."

"This is no celebration," Pell said. "This is a wake. We thought we'd finally seen the last of you. I knew it was too good to be true."

"Had me dead and buried, did you?" Walker asked.

"Sure," said Pell. "Nick was starting to add up the insurance money but she couldn't remember if you carry double indemnity."

"Very funny," said Walker.

Lucas shook his head at Pell. He was slumped in a deckchair smoking a cigar.

The college boys had dropped their sails and were starting to come over to us.

"How about fixing yourself up?" Walker said to Nick.

"Right, Dave," she said and I followed her down the companionway to get the champagne.

She went through the main cabin into the galley and brought out the silver tray.

"Here we go again, Harry." Her teeth were tight together and when she started getting glasses down out of the rack I noticed her hands were shaking.

"What do you think I should wear for this party?" she said. "What's appropriate? It's five o'clock in the morning—do you think the college boys would like me in a cocktail dress?"

"Okay," I said. "Take it easy. You know how he is with new people around to impress."

She leaned forward with both hands on the counter and closed her eyes. "Oh, Harry, I thought he was dead."

I put my hand on her shoulder. It was the first time I'd touched her but it was so easy and natural I hardly thought about it.

"Everyone believed he was dead, Nick."

"Yes, I know that," she said. "But I was sure of it. I even wanted . . ."

I came up hard on her shoulder and pulled her around until she was facing me. "That's not true and you know it. You're putting in things that were never there."

I let my hand drop and we stood there looking at each other, and then she brought up her own hand and touched my cheek.

"Good, tough, honest, Harry Snow."

I might have kissed her but I wanted the first

make it easy

LADIES, don't throw away that old lipstick case, rather give it to that man around your house. It will make an excellent container for his small drills that are forever slipping out of sight when he wants them the most. Any small amount of lipstick remaining in the case should not be removed, for it serves as a firm base to hold the small drills.

—Joseph Warnalis, Philadelphia, Pa.

time to be right and unhurried and unspoiled by any chance interruption.

"Take up the tray," she said and hurried back through the main cabin to their stateroom. I went up with the wine.

Walker opened up the bottles and the college boys stood around admiring the *Sealark*. In a few minutes Nick came up with her hair freshly combed and the lipstick on and each of them lost interest in the boat.

"Fellers," Walker said, "this is Nick, my wife."

She smiled and shook hands all around and thanked them for saving his life.

One of them said, "We didn't save him, Mrs. Walker. He just swam up to the boat."

I DIDN'T want any champagne. I'd slept in my clothes and I wanted to shave and get cleaned up a little. I decided I'd quit the job at the end of the trip. I wasn't sure if Nick would leave Walker but I didn't want to be taking his money when I asked her.

Suddenly Walker called for attention and lifted his glass in the air. "I'll tell you who would have got me if you boys hadn't been there. That's Captain Harry Snow of New Bedford, the best damned skipper I ever had!"

He drank off his champagne and one of the college boys said, "Hear, hear!"

Walker came over and put his arm around my shoulder. "Yes, sir," he said. "Everything I have is the best."

I didn't dare look at Nick just then. If I hadn't heard Walker pull this act before I would have felt a lot worse than I did.

"Let's go below, Cap," Walker said, "and see what we can find for this gang to eat."

When we got down there he told me he was going to change out of the clothes he'd borrowed and for me to bring him in a drink of Scotch.

"Bring one for yourself, Harry," he said. "You may need it."

"Not me," I said.

"Don't be too sure about that."

He went back into the stateroom and by the time I got in there with the whiskey he was in his shorts. He was getting thick around the middle but he was a long way from being fat.

He took the glass and drank half the whiskey.

"I suppose you think I'm clumsy," he said.

I told him it could happen to anyone.

He nodded. "How'd you happen to wake up when you did?"

I told him about feeling the groundswell and knowing we must have been in close to land.

"Everyone else was asleep, huh?"

"That's right."

"Woke 'em yourself, did you?"

I didn't have any idea what he was getting at. "I woke Nick and Mr. Lucas. Lucas woke Pell."

He sat down on the edge of the bed and began to pull on a pair of black silk socks.

"One of them was awake, Harry."

Just about then I began to have an idea what was coming.

"I didn't fall overboard," he said carefully. "I was slugged."

He looked up at me and reached over and offered me the glass of whiskey but I shook my head. I felt as if all the wind had been knocked out of me.

"Who was it, Mr. Walker?" I asked finally.

"Who do you think?"

For about three seconds I was sure it was Nick.

"I wouldn't know," I said.

"Care to take a guess?" He went to the closet and pulled out a pair of clean khaki pants.

"No," I said. "I wouldn't want to do that."

"You were here with them. You must have noticed something, Harry."

"Don't you know who it was, Mr. Walker?"

"I was hit from behind. I woke up in the water."

"Still," I said, "I'd think you'd have an idea about it."

"Meaning what?"

I licked my lips. "Would you invite anyone on board who had a reason to kill you?"

MEANING Lucas and Pell?" he asked. He opened a drawer and brought out a silk shirt with red and white vertical stripes. "Fifteen years ago I was nothing, Harry. I was peddling hides for maybe $10,000 a year and saving none of it. I saw a chance to get into business for myself but I needed 40 grand to get started. George Lucas loaned me the money. Because he believed in me." He slipped on the shirt and began to button it up. "You wouldn't think a man who would do that for me would have any reason to kill me, now, would you?"

I shook my head, feeling sick.

"Except for this," he said. "The only way George had to cover himself was to insure my life. We took out $50,000 of life insurance and I've kept it paid up ever since. Do you see how that might make me stop and think?"

I nodded. There wasn't anything I could think of to say about it, though

"I don't know, Harry," he said. "I hope it wasn't George Lucas, but that amount of money could be a strong temptation if he really needed it, and right now most of the shoe people are having it slow." He went to his closet again and brought out a pair of blue canvas shoes. "Now you take Charley Pell. We've been pretty close over the years. Maybe you noticed how we ride each other, but that doesn't mean a thing. About six months ago he was in a real jam with the government. I won't tell you the details but he'd have gone to jail

if I hadn't covered up for him. You do a favor like that and it gives you a hell of a hold over a man. Not that I ever plan to use it, but still it's there, and maybe Charley got to thinking about it."

He sat on the bed looking down at his feet and for the first time I began to see what a terrible spot he was in.

"My wife and my two best friends," he said and looked up at me. "Was it Nick, Harry?"

My palms were wet and I rubbed them dry along my pants. "Look, Mr. Walker, if I knew who it was I'd tell you. But I just don't believe Nick cares about money that much."

"I'd like to believe that," he said. "I'd like to believe that in the worst way."

I felt really sorry for him then. A man has to have a few things he can believe in without question and once he begins to suspect them the least little bit he's lost. Suspicion is like the water in a tainted well; so little can make the whole of it taste bad.

Walker was dressed now and he finished off his whiskey. "As soon as we feed these kids and get rid of them I'm going to find out who it was, Harry. I'll have to get mean and dirty doing it, but I think I have a right to play it that way. Don't you?"

"You have a right to know who it was. I wouldn't know how to go about finding out."

"I know how."

He opened a little drawer beside his bed and brought out his thin platinum pocket watch and a .32 automatic pistol he kept there. He slipped the watch in his pocket and began to load the gun.

"I'll tell you something," he said. "You don't get what I've got in this world without learning to play rough when it counts. Up there on top, Lucas or Pell or Nick is beginning to sweat, wondering how long I'm going to stick to this falling overboard story. I'm not taking any chances, Harry. That's all this thing is for." He patted the gun and slipped it into his pocket. Then he put his arm on my shoulder.

"It's good to have one guy I can trust. Let's go see what we can find for breakfast."

ROWAN said, "You didn't ask Walker what his plan was?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I guess I thought he'd have told me if he'd wanted me to know about it."

"You two were pretty chummy right then?"

"Yes."

"In spite of the fact that you planned to ask his wife to divorce him?"

"Well, yes. But I had decided to quit and speak to Nick before he told me about being hit on the head."

"His telling you changed your feelings about her?"

"In a way, yes."

"How?"

"I thought there might be one chance in a hundred she'd done it."

"And this one chance in a hundred meant she'd tried to kill her husband in order to be free to marry you?"

"It wasn't as definite as that. It was just a suspicion."

"You've built up Mrs. Walker in your mind as a kind of ideal woman, haven't you?"

"Yes. I guess I have."

"All right. Now what about the belaying pin?"

"Well, while I was getting breakfast I kept wondering what might have been used to hit Mr. Walker. That was when I thought of the belaying pin."

"This pin was kept in the stern cockpit?"

"Yes. In a slot on the fishbox."

"Did you go back to see if it was still there?"

"Not right then. After breakfast the fog lifted and there was a little breeze from the west. The college boys wanted to get started and when I went aft to cast them off I looked around for the belaying pin. It wasn't there."

WITH the ketch slipping away from us and Walker and the others up on deck calling good-by, I could almost feel the weight of the missing belaying pin in my hand. Some one must have stood right here and looked forward past the dinghy to where Walker had been sitting up there on the flying bridge. There'd have been a little glow from the masthead running light, but with the engines going it would have been nothing at all to sneak up behind him. The whole thing would have been done in a minute.

I decided the pin had been thrown overboard.

I wanted to tell Walker about the pin being gone but when I went forward he'd already started to put his plan into action.

"Nick," he said. "You and George go back aft. I've got something I want to talk over with Charley and Cap."

Everyone looked surprised.

"What is this?" Pell asked. "I thought we were going fishing."

"No, Charley," Walker said. "We're not going fishing."

"But what is it?" Nick said. "What's wrong?"

"You'll find out."

Lucas started to speak but changed his mind. Nick looked quickly at me, then shrugged and followed Lucas back along the deck to the stern cockpit. Walker and Pell and I went into the deckhouse.

"How'd you sleep last night, Charley?" Walker asked. He wasn't smiling and I could see the bulge the gun made in his pocket.

Pell rubbed his chin. "If there's something on your mind, Dave, let's have it. Let's not kid around."

"All right," Walker said and touched the bump over his ear. "You didn't hit me quite hard enough, did you?"

Pell smiled and looked at me, but when he saw my face he stopped smiling. "This is pretty early in the morning for a gag, Dave."

"This is no gag," Walker said. "Is it, Harry?"

"No."

"What is it then?" Pell asked.

"Just what it sounds like."

Walker waited and Pell licked his lips. "What am I supposed to say now?" he demanded.

"Whatever you want," said Walker.

They stood there facing each other for nearly 15 seconds and then Pell nodded his head quickly and said, "All right, Walker, you're called. If you're holding anything let's have a look."

"I'm the judge here. How do you plead?"

"Let's have a charge."

"You heard the charge. You didn't hit me hard enough."

Pell said slowly, "I didn't hit you on the head, Dave."

"You're a liar," said Walker flatly. "I thought you'd at least have guts enough to admit it."

I was sure Pell was going to hit him then. His fists came up and he took a step forward but then he stopped and shook his head. "You wouldn't say that without something to back it up. What is it? What have you got?"

"I've got the best evidence there is," Walker said. "I saw you."

For the first time there was doubt and maybe fear on Pell's face. "I don't get this, Dave. What are you trying to pull?"

Walker's voice went up. "I saw you up there last night. I'm saying it now and I'll say it in court if you want it that way. Why did you want to kill me? Did you think I'd put the squeeze on you sometime, was that it?"

"I owe you a lot," Pell said almost in a whisper, "but I don't owe you this. I don't know what you're after, Dave. I wish I did."

Walker's hand went into his pocket and came out with the gun. "I tell you I saw you! Admit it! That's all I want!"

"Okay, I admit it." Pell was really scared now. "I admit it."

"You tried to kill me?"

"Yes."

"What did you hit me with?"

"I . . ." He opened and shut his mouth and shook his head. "Look, Dave, I . . ."

"Okay." Walker put the gun back in his pocket. "Sit down and have a smoke, Charley." He turned to me. "Well? What do you think?"

"Once a cop always a cop, eh, Callahan?"

I was certain Pell was innocent. He was shaking and there was no color in his face and he'd been ready to admit anything. He'd even have admitted using the belaying pin if he could have thought of it.

"Well?" Walker asked again. "Did he do it?"

"No," I said. "I don't think so."

Pell was sitting down and Walker went over and handed him a cigarette and lit it for him. "Someone tried to kill me, Charley," Walker said. "I've got to find out who it was. You can understand that, can't you?"

"I don't know," Pell said, looking sick. "You're stretching friendship pretty damned far."

"How much farther can you go than murder?" Walker demanded. "I could be dead now. Get Lucas up here, Cap."

"Now wait a minute, Dave," Pell said. "George is not a well man. You hand him a shock like you just handed me and you might kill him."

"What do you want me to do? Sit back and do nothing? If he did it he's already had his shock when he saw me alive on that sailboat."

"And if he didn't do it?"

"That'll make it Nick. If it's Nick . . ."

Walker rubbed both hands over his head and Pell stood up.

"Suppose it is Nick," Pell said. "Are you looking for vengeance?"

"Am I supposed to forgive her?"

"No. But would you put her in jail?"

"How do I know what I'd do?"

Pell put his hand on Walker's shoulder. "That's my point. You're not thinking straight. You're going too fast with it."

"Too fast? I was in the water two hours, Charley. It happened at midnight. What do you think has been on my mind for the last six hours?"

"I know, I know," Pell said, nodding. "But you're planning to bring George Lucas in here and

accuse him of murder. I tell you you're not thinking straight. What reason would George have for killing you?"

"A better reason than you," Walker said and told him about the insurance policy.

I was watching Pell's face and a curious look came into it. He must have been sure it was Nick and when he heard about Lucas he seemed almost relieved. If it had been up to him to control it in some way, his choice between the two of them, like mine, was clear.

"All right, Dave," he said. "I guess you've got a right to play rough with George."

"Go get him, Cap," said Walker.

I started out and then I remembered the belaying pin. I stopped and told Walker it was missing.

"So that's what it was," he said. "How'd you think of it?"

I told him I didn't know, that it had just come into my mind.

He grunted. "I can use that information."

"I'd have told you before but . . ." I looked at Pell.

"That's all right, Harry," Walker said. "You did just right."

I went out on deck. Lucas and Nick were both there, waiting. We were idled down to a couple of knots but already the ketch, with her sails up, was dropping away on her course for Maine. I remember thinking I'd give a good deal to be aboard her.

When I called to Lucas, Nick jumped up and started to follow him forward. I waved her back but she came on anyway. Lucas went by me into the deckhouse without speaking.

"Look, Nick," I said when she reached me, "no one wants you in there right now."

"I have a right to know what's going on." She started by me but I caught her arm. Her jaw was set and when she looked up at me there was only anger in her eyes.

"Sure beats a lot of hot roadwork doesn't it?"

"Five minutes more," I said. "You can wait that long."

I let go of her arm and, although the anger was still there, she turned and went back. I couldn't feel anything for her at that moment; it was as if a switch had been shut off inside me.

Lucas was just settling into a chair. He looked around at each of us, taking his time in that slow deliberate way he did everything. Finally he said to Walker, "How long have I known you, Dave? Maybe 20 years? In all that time I never saw you frightened before. Not once."

Walker smiled, but there was no warmth in it. "You're wrong. I'm not frightened now, but I was the day I hit you for that $40,000 loan."

"That day you were cocky and full of fight," Lucas said. "That's why I let you have the money. Right now I wouldn't lend you a dime. But I'd like to help if you'll tell me how I can."

His cigar had gone out and he took a wooden kitchen match from his pocket and lit it on his thumbnail. As he held the match up to the end of the cigar, the flame was steady.

"You're a tough old turkey, George, I'll give you that," Walker said. "If you needed money, why didn't you come to me?"

"If I ever do need money," Lucas said cheerfully, "I'll come to you."

"You don't surprise easy, do you?"

"I can be surprised, Dave. You've done it once already this morning."

"How was that?"

"When you said you fell overboard, sober, in a calm sea."

Walker's gun came out then. "Are you surprised again now?"

"Yes," said Lucas quietly.

Walker moved toward him. "Afraid?"

"Reasonably afraid."

Walker, with his left hand, took off Lucas' Panama hat and spun it into a corner. He brought the muzzle of the gun up flush against the old man's bald head.

Pell said, "Now look here, Walker . . ."

"Stay where you are, Charles," Lucas said sharply. Then quietly, looking up at Walker, "Say what you have to say, Dave."

"How do you know I didn't fall overboard?"

"Because I can read your face like an open book. I could see deep trouble there and I've been waiting ready to help." He brought his hand up slowly until it touched Walker's forearm a few inches back from the gun. "It won't help to threaten me, Dave. I can promise you that."

"You always were a beautiful liar, George."

"Perhaps. But you're the liar right now and all of us know it."

"You can skip that," Walker said. "What did you do with the belaying pin?"

Lucas' hand dropped down to his lap. "The belaying pin. The one you have for the fish. Of course."

"What about it?"

"Put your pistol away and listen to me. It's not scaring me very much but it might go off." Walker brought the gun away but kept it in his hand. "That's better. This is a dirty rotten mess but you don't have to make it any worse, Dave. Do you honestly think I tried to kill you?"

"I know you did."

"No," Lucas said. "You may have a good reason to suspect me but I can tell you're not sure. You can't bluff me on anything as serious as this. I lay awake for some time last night, Dave, but I didn't leave my bunk. Neither did Charles, here."

"How long were you awake?"

"I heard it strike one," Lucas said carefully. "By that time you must have been gone."

"Did you have a light on down there?"

"No. But from my bunk there was enough light to see anyone using the stairs. My eyes were closed most of the time but my ears weren't, and Charles was snoring."

"Did you see anyone on the stairs?"

"I saw Nick. Just before midnight she went up the stairs and was gone about a minute." Lucas took a deep breath. "I don't like to tell you this but it's a time for plain speaking."

I remember thinking mechanically about it. I knew Lucas had been in the starboard bunk in the main cabin and from there he could have looked directly out to the little hall at the bottom of the companionway. If there were no lights down there or up here in the deckhouse he could have seen Nick silhouetted against the light in the sky coming through the glass at the head of the stairs. I knew it was possible for him to have seen her. Beyond that I was as certain as I'd been about Pell that he wasn't lying. I tried to form a picture in my mind of Nick going aft for the belaying pin and sneaking up behind Walker with it, but I couldn't do it.

"I give you fair warning, George," Walker said. "If I find out you're lying about this I'll kill you."

"You'd have a right to do that, Dave."

"Do you want us to clear out of here, Dave?" Pell asked.

"No," Walker said. "I want you all to hear what she's got to say." He went to the door.

Pell picked up Lucas' hat and brought it to him. I went over to the steering seat and sat down, feeling weak and sick, but knowing it was out of my hands and that all I could do was stay there and watch.

Almost from my first day on the boat I'd begun to study Nick whenever she was aboard and after a while it got so I could close my eyes and she'd be there. I knew exactly how she looked fighting a fish, laughing, or just turning her head when someone spoke to her. I'd seen her dressed up to go to some party on shore and I'd seen her worn out and tired at the end of a long day of fishing, and there wasn't a time when she hadn't seemed so beautiful that it was nearly enough just to be close to her. It wasn't her looks alone. Everything she did was graceful and sometimes, when she was talking, I'd look at something else just to listen to her.

But in spite of all my studying, I realized when she walked into the deckhouse that morning I really knew next to nothing about her.

"Sit down, Nick," Walker said, and although her eyebrows went up, she took a chair beside Lucas. "First, is there anything you'd like to say?"

"No, David."

"I'll make it quick then," he said. "After you went down to bed last night, did you leave the stateroom for any reason before Harry came in to tell you I was overboard?"

She had this trick of cocking her head a little to one side when someone asked her questions she wanted to think about and she did it now. "Why, yes, I did."

"Why?"

"I came up here for a package of cigarettes."

"Did you turn on a light?"

"No."

"Just picked up the cigarettes and went back to bed again. Is that it?"

"Why, no. I believe I smoked about half a cigarette before I went down again."

"And that's your story?"

"That's the truth! Now what is this all about?"

So there it was. If Pell and Lucas had told the truth—and I'd been sure they had—then Nick was lying calmly and cold-bloodedly. I honestly don't know what I'd expected her to say but I hadn't been prepared for this.

Walker turned to Lucas. "Now what, George?"

Lucas, with his elbows on the arms of his chair, leaned forward until his chin was resting on his folded hands. He took his time about answering. "I believe she's entitled to know whatever suspicions you may have about her, Dave."

"All right," said Walker, and turned back to Nick. "I didn't fall overboard last night. I was knocked unconscious and woke up in the water."

She drew in a long breath and held it, and I thought if she was faking her surprise and pain, then all the straight wonderful decency I'd found in her had been a fake as well. "Yes," she said finally. "I suppose I knew it had to be as bad as this. Do you suspect me, David? Is that it?"

He laughed and it was like a slap in the face. "Sure, I suspect you. Why shouldn't I? I suspected Charley and George. What makes you a privileged character?"

She started to speak, stopped, and spread her hands in a hopeless little gesture.

He took a step toward her. "Do you want to accuse George or Charley of lying?"

She brought the tips of her fingers to the side of her hand. "No, David, but let me think . . ."

"Dammit, why do you have to think? Did you do it or didn't you?"

"Don't you know I *couldn't* have done it?"

He laughed again. "Do you mean you love me so much? Is that it?"

Slowly she shook her head. "No, David."

"You don't love me at all, do you? Let's have the truth about that!"

"You've always had the truth about that."

"Have I? Do you think I'm stupid? Do you think I haven't watched you these last few weeks? A blind man could see the change in you! Who is it? Don Belcher? Johnny O'Brien? Or who?"

She dropped her hands. "Very well then. Let us have it all. I warned you this might happen and you accepted me on those terms. You're quite right, David. I've fallen in love." She looked around at me. "Forgive me, Harry, I would not have had it this way."

"Harry!"

I was looking at Nick and there was only the wonder of it in my mind. Then, out of the corner of my eye, I saw Walker's gun come out and point my way.

"So that's who it was!"

He said it almost in a whisper and as I stood up from the seat he fired. The bullet knocked me down. He fired quickly again and missed. I was on my knees and I remember Nick screaming; then I managed to get up and dived toward him. I was going for the gun and his third shot went through my left hand. My momentum knocked him back onto the deck with me on top of him, both of my hands on the gun. Then it went off again.

At first I didn't even know he'd been hit. As soon as it came loose from his hand I shoved the gun away so that it slid along the deck to Pell's feet. Nick was still screaming and somehow I stood up. I remember looking down at Walker and that was when I saw the blood coming out of his neck below the ear.

Suddenly Nick stopped screaming and in the silence I could hear the blood dripping on the deck from my left hand. I could feel more of it pouring down my back under my shirt.

I didn't know if Walker was conscious or not. His eyes were open and I looked down at him and said, "I'm sorry."

It was a crazy kind of thing to say but I know I meant it.

"Some moment," said Rowan. He was back at the ice water again. "Why did you tell him you were sorry?"

"I *was* sorry. All I meant to do was get the gun away from him."

"You figure he shot you out of a sudden jealous rage? Because Mrs. Walker had just told him she loved you?"

"Partly that. He must have thought I'd tried to kill him the night before. He even said that. He said, 'So that's who it was' just before he fired."

"You did make a move in his direction before he fired, didn't you?"

"Well, yes. I guess it was my idea to get the gun away from him."

"Did you get your hands on the gun before he fired the last time?"

"I don't know. I was trying to, but I don't know if I actually did or not. Things happened pretty fast."

"You definitely had no idea of trying to shoot him?"

"None at all."

"If you had got the gun away from him and then shot him, some one would have noticed it, wouldn't they?"

"Does anyone say that?"

He wouldn't answer that. "Carry on with your story."

As I went down on my knees to have a closer look at Walker's wound Lucas said, "Pick up the gun, Charles," to Pell, and then he was pushing me away and bending over Walker himself.

It took me a few seconds to figure out what Lucas meant. Pell was pointing the pistol at me and slowly I began to get the idea both of them were sure I'd tried to kill Walker the night before. Even Walker must have been sure of it.

I took one quick look at the shock and horror on Nick's face and then I got to my feet and started toward the stairs.

Pell asked me where I was going and I must have said something like "bandages" because he let me go and I made it down to the galley where the first-aid box was kept. I had it in my hand and was starting up again when I passed out.

The pain woke me up. I was lying face down on a bunk in the main cabin and I could feel some one working on my shoulder. When I started to twist away Nick said, "All right, Harry, all right. This has got to be done."

There was a roaring in my ears and in a little while I knew the engines were up full and I asked where we were going.

"Home," she said. "We'll be there pretty soon. There'll be an ambulance to meet us."

"How is he?"

"Bad," she said. "Don't talk."

She already had a tourniquet on above my elbow but she hadn't started to work on my hand.

"Last night," I said. "Lucas thinks I . . ."

"Please, Harry, don't talk. Not now."

"They think I did it."

"They think we both did it," she said.

I managed to get up and dived toward him. His third shot went through my left hand.

I had to work on this for quite a while. I couldn't make it come out right. I was sure Pell hadn't done it and I knew I hadn't done it, but that left only Lucas and Nick. That was the way it had been before she told Walker she loved me.

"What do you think, Nick?" I asked finally.

"I'm not thinking right now, Harry," she said. "I'm trying to stop your shoulder from bleeding. You've lost an awful lot of blood."

She was trying to sew up the hole in the back of my shoulder and it hurt like hell. I wanted to tell her I loved her and that I was sorry about what had happened to Walker, but it was too mixed up to come out straight. Maybe I started to say something, but I must have gone out again because the next time I opened my eyes she was sponging out the wound in my hand.

She had it all washed out and nearly bandaged when I heard Lucas on the stairs.

"You'd better come up here right away," he called to Nick.

She smiled at me for just a second before she left.

I began to think what would happen when we got into Marblehead. If there was going to be an ambulance they must have called the police. I wasn't afraid of the police but I realized Lucas and Pell and Walker, if he was still alive, could make a terrible case against me. I was the one who had come out on deck just before the boat went up on the beach and I was the one who had found the belaying pin gone. On the face of it, with the way I felt about Nick, I had the best motive of anyone for wanting Walker dead. . . .

In a while Nick was back. I just looked up and there she was beside me.

"He's dead, Harry."

There were tears on her cheeks but she wasn't really crying.

"It was an accident, Nick," I said. "I honestly don't think he really meant to start shooting at me."

She touched my head and I reached up and held her hand hard.

I said, "We've got to be honest with each other. You know how it looks against me and I know how it looks against you."

She nodded slowly. "Yes, Harry."

"Maybe if we'd had more time together then . . ."

She pulled her hand away. "How can we be in love and not trust each other all the way?"

"It must be a question of time," I said. "We haven't had any time together at all. I haven't even told you I love you."

"I knew you loved me," she said. "I knew that from the start. You're no good at hiding your feelings. Let's not even talk about this now. You'll need some things at the hospital. I'll pack a bag."

"I won't be in the hospital long."

"Of course not. But you'll need to shave and have some fresh clothes to put on."

"I'll get my things," I said and started to sit up.

"Stay where you are, Harry. Do you want to start bleeding again? I know the things you need."

She went forward and I lay back again feeling dizzy.

My quarters were out of sight beyond the galley and when Nick came back without my duffel I

thought at first there was something she couldn't find. And then I saw the money in her hand. I only had to look once to know what it was. Her fingers were over the gold clip with his initials, but it was Walker's money. There was a $50 bill on the outside.

She stood there letting me see the money and then she started away toward the companionway without even looking at me.

"Nick!" I yelled and rolled off the bunk onto my feet.

She didn't stop. I took three steps after her but then I began to black out and had to catch the table and hold myself up. I knew I couldn't make it up the stairs.

At first I didn't even begin to think where she'd found it. All I knew was that the money had been in the clip in Walker's pocket the night before. He'd paid off a $10 bet to Pell on the baseball game and right after that he'd started to talk about going to the Cape after stripers.

I thought I was going to be sick and I went back to the bunk to lie down. My head was spinning but I wasn't sick and pretty soon I opened my eyes. Lucas was sitting on the edge of the bunk across the way with the money in his hands.

No one had ever looked at me with so much disgust before. He slipped the bills out of the clip, unfolded them, and fanned them out in his fingers to count.

"A hundred and thirty-five dollars," he said finally. "You cleaned him right out, didn't you? His wife, his money, his boat . . . You didn't want to miss any of it, huh?"

I tried to sit up but I couldn't make it. "Where did she . . ."

"Save your strength," he said. "You'll need it when the police start to work on you. Or would you like to talk about it right now?"

"Look, Mr. Lucas," I said, "all I want to know is where she found that money."

"You know where she found it. Right in with your shirts where you left it."

My head cleared then. This was something definite I could fight. Someone had planted the money there intending for it to be found. And Nick had found it. But I wasn't ready to think about that yet. I thought Lucas or Pell might be trying to frame me but neither one of them could have known Nick and I were in love. Up until the time Walker shot me they hadn't suspected me and it would have been crazy for them to try and pin the thing on someone who didn't have a motive. If it was Lucas the only logical person to frame would be Nick or Pell. After Walker shot me I became a suspect all right, but neither Pell nor Lucas had been below before this. Neither one of them could have put the money in with my clothes. It had to be Nick.

I went back over the moment Walker had accused her and one thing was absolutely certain. Guilty or innocent, she couldn't have picked a better time to tell him she loved me, if she wanted to protect herself.

It came fast and shockingly then. Lucas had seen her on the stairs, she knew better than anyone where the belaying pin was kept, and she was the only one who could have put the money with my clothes—if she'd bothered to do that at all.

Lucas got up and leaned across the table toward me. "Don't you even have the courage to own up to what you've done? Are you going to lie there like a whipped dog until they drag it out of you?"

I knew I had to sit up then. I pushed hard with my good arm and let my legs drop off the edge of the bunk and made it.

"All right," I said. "I fell in love with her. I should have quit the job when it first started to happen, but I didn't have the guts to do that." His face began to blur and I had to wait until my head cleared again. "But nothing happened between us. That's one thing, Mr. Lucas. I'd never play around behind a man's back."

"Unless it was dark and you had an iron bar in your hand," he said. "Don't tell me what you'd do behind a man's back!"

"No," I said and licked my lips. I started to say I'd never creep up behind a man like that, when it came to me. In a way it was almost funny. Here I'd been worrying about all there was against me and all along I had the best alibi of anyone. I said, "Now I'll prove it to you."

For just an instant he looked doubtful. "Go ahead and try."

"You were awake down here. Could I have walked back through here, between you and Mr. Pell, without you seeing me?"

"No," he said. "But you didn't have to do that. You went back over the deck."

"Up through the forward hatch you mean?"

"That's right."

"Mr. Lucas," I said, "you've been up on the flying bridge. When you're running a boat you look forward, and all there is forward of the bridge is 15 feet of open deck. The masthead light isn't

make it easy

If the seat in a faucet is worn, the tap may continue to leak after a new washer has been inserted. This can be temporarily remedied by using two washers.

—Richard E. Maples, Los Angeles, Calif.

very bright but I don't see how I could have come up through that hatch and got back past the bridge without Mr. Walker seeing me. It might be possible once in 100 times but I wouldn't have taken a chance on it if I were planning to sneak up and kill him."

"Now wait a minute," he said. "If you were planning to kill him it wouldn't matter if he saw you come out on deck. You could have had the belaying pin in your pocket and . . ."

"If he'd seen me come on deck just before he was hit, that would have been the first thing he'd have mentioned!"

Lucas didn't want to give up on it. "You knew he hadn't seen you and that's why you went through with it."

"That's crazy, and you know it. If I was going to kill him I wouldn't have given a damn if he saw me or not. I might even have spoken to him before I hit him on the head." I pointed at the money in his hand. "Just think a minute, Mr. Lucas. Would I ever be dumb enough to hide that, with the clip still on it, among my own things? Would I let Nick go in there to pack my clothes and find it?"

I stood up slowly. "I don't feel so good but I could have stopped her. I'm still able to move around."

"Then you'd better get your things together. We're almost in."

I had to sit down and rest a couple of times but managed to pack and got myself and the bag up through the hatch onto the deck. By then we were beginning to slow down to come into the yacht club float. Up on the street above the runway was a white ambulance and a couple of police cars. At that time of the morning not much was moving in the harbor.

Nick was at the wheel bringing us in with Lucas and Pell beside her. When I crawled out on deck I took one quick look back at them and then the whole terrible mess swept back over me. I was certain of only one thing: I was still in love with her as much as ever and I couldn't suspect her anymore.

By the time Rowan reached the hospital I'd had a blood transfusion, X-rays, and a lot of expert and painful patching up. My shoulder blade was chipped and a small bone in my hand was pretty badly smashed but no one had to tell me how lucky I was. I suppose if Walker had still been alive I'd have been sore at what he'd done but now I only felt sorry for him.

Nick hadn't spoken to me at the float. Lucas and Pell had come out and given the ambulance attendants a hand in getting me off onto the stretcher, but they hadn't said anything to me either.

Going over it with Rowan and answering his questions hadn't done any good. Everything pointed to Nick. If I'd been on a jury I'm sure I would have voted against her, but I wasn't on any jury. I was in love with her and maybe part of it was pride, but I couldn't accept the idea she'd done such an ugly thing.

Love is a wonderful thing," Rowan said when I tried to explain how I felt about her.

"It's not just love," I told him. "It's having faith in your own judgment of people. You have to have some people you can take on trust. If you start suspecting them you're licked."

"You may be right, Snow, but in a deal like this I'm paid to be suspicious of everyone." He stood up and pushed his chair back against the wall. "Mrs. Walker and Pell and Lucas are downstairs waiting. I told them I wanted to go over it with you and then I'd bring them in here and let them know what I thought about it. I'll get them now."

"Hey, wait a minute," I said. "What do you think about it?"

"You'll see. It's a hot day and I only want to go over it once."

There was something in the way he said it, a certain self-confidence, that made me think he really had it. I guess my mouth must have dropped open.

"Do you mean you know who hit Walker on the head?"

"I had an idea when I came in here," he said. "You filled in most of the blanks. It's a question of suspicion. Suspect the right party and you have it." . . .

Nick came in first. She was still in her jersey and shorts but most of the lipstick she'd put on for the college boys was gone. She was worn and tired and worried and just as lovely as ever. When we looked at each other we each had the same question in our mind and in that first second it was answered for me. In spite of the money she'd found in my clothes she believed in me again.

"I'll make this as fast as possible," Rowan said, and turned to Nick. "You said you had no idea Walker knew how you felt about Snow here?"

"That's right," said Nick. She came over and stood beside my bed.

"But he did know you were in love with someone?"

"He said so. Everyone heard him."

Lucas had gone over by the window. He had his hat in his hand and he looked as neat and unruffled as ever. Pell was leaning back against the bureau. He still hadn't shaved and he was in the same clothes he'd hurried into on the way out to sea when we were looking for Walker.

"How do you suppose he knew you were in love?" Rowan asked Nick.

She smiled a little. "I suppose it showed. I know I've felt very different."

"Did it show on Snow the same way?"

"Well, I noticed it," she said, smiling some more. "But of course that's what I was looking for."

"Yes," Rowan said. He wasn't smiling at all as he turned to Lucas. "You made the statement you could read Walker's face like an open book. You knew when he came off the sailboat he was in some sort of trouble beyond having fallen overboard by accident?"

Lucas nodded. "I knew Dave a long time."

"And you're a good judge of faces?"

"Moderately good, yes."

"In the time you were on the *Sealark* did it occur to you there might be something between Mrs. Walker and Snow?"

Lucas rubbed his chin. "I don't think the thought ever actually took shape. Last night on my way to bed I had an impression they broke off a conversation when I came down from the flying bridge, but other than that, there was nothing."

"But you did get that impression?"

"Yes."

"How did you happen to be aboard the *Sealark?*"

Lucas' eyebrows went up. "I was invited."

"When?"

"About a week ago."

"You'd been on the boat before?"

"Yes."

"For a cruise?"

"I'd never been out for more than a day at a time."

"Did Walker make any kind of a special effort to have you go this time?"

"I wouldn't say so."

"Are you sure?"

"Well, he said Charles was going along and he hoped I could come too."

"There was no important business for you to discuss together?"

"No. None at all."

ROWAN turned to Pell. "Would you say Walker made a special effort in your case?"

"Yes. He practically twisted my arm, now that you mention it."

"Was there any business for you to discuss?"

Pell shook his head. "There wasn't any business—period."

"All right," Rowan said. "I have a picture of Walker as a man who knew how to handle himself under pressure. Did any of you ever see him blow his top?"

"Yes," said Lucas quietly. "We all saw him blow up when he shot at Snow."

Rowan was excited then, in spite of himself. He pointed his finger to Lucas. "Have you got it?"

For the first time during all of it, Lucas was confused. "Have I got what?"

"Never mind," said Rowan. He reached into his pocket and held up a watch. It was Walker's, the one he'd put in his pocket when he'd changed his clothes after coming aboard. Rowan faced Nick. "Your husband carried this all of the time?"

"Most of the time," Nick said. "I gave it to him."

"Did he have it in his pocket yesterday?"

"Yes," Nick said.

"You're sure?"

"I saw it," said Pell. "He brought it out in the afternoon while we were fishing."

"Did he change his clothes before supper last night?"

"No," said Nick.

THEN he should have had it in his pocket when you left Rockport. Isn't that so?" Rowan was snapping out his questions now and there was sweat on his forehead.

Nick nodded.

"All right. If he had it in his pocket how did it get into the drawer in his stateroom where he kept his gun?" He looked at me for an answer to this one.

"I don't know."

"You don't know? It was there in the drawer. You saw it, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"He didn't say anything about finding it there?"

"No. He just put it in his pocket and loaded his gun."

"Don't any of you see what this means?" Rowan demanded. He waited for about 10 seconds before he said, "This watch should be at the bottom of the ocean!"

"I don't get it," said Pell. "You're going too fast for me."

He was going too fast for all of us.

"If you had an expensive timepiece like this," Rowan said, tapping his finger on the watch, "and you went overboard thinking it was in your pocket and then you found it in a drawer by your bed, wouldn't you say something about finding it there?"

"Are you saying Walker himself put the watch in his drawer?" Lucas asked.

"Certainly I'm saying it. He put it there sometime before he decided to sail over to Cape Cod. He made a mistake bringing it out when Snow was with him but it wouldn't have mattered if he hadn't made one more big mistake later."

He looked slowly around the room and although all of us were beginning to get it nobody said a word.

Rowan said finally, "Snow should be dead. He was the intended victim all along. The only victim. If he had been killed I'd have missed it. Everyone would have missed it. That was Walker's one big mistake. He didn't kill his man."

Nick began to shake and I reached over and held her arm.

Rowan looked at me. "The next time a man starts shooting at you, Snow, you'd better be suspicious of his reasons why. Walker put the money clip in with your clothes, probably during the time you were all having breakfast. He was framing you for attempted murder."

"Now wait a minute," Pell said. "Do you say Dave jumped overboard on purpose in the middle of the night 15 miles at sea?"

"Certainly," said Rowan. "He'd seen the ketch becalmed out there and he undoubtedly had on a life preserver in case anything went wrong. If he'd had to, he could have swum ashore. But he was almost certain to be picked up, with everyone out looking for him, even if he'd missed the ketch."

"Suppose he'd been picked up wearing a life preserver?" Pell said. "That would have ruined his story that he'd been knocked on the head."

"Look," Rowan said impatiently, "there're a dozen kinds of inflatable life belts, and some won't float when deflated. As soon as he sees a boat coming to pick him up he deflates the belt and lets it sink."

"But why all the trouble?" Pell demanded. "If he wanted to kill Harry, why not throw *him* overboard some night? Why shoot him in front of three other people?"

"I can tell you that," Lucas said slowly. "The one and only way Dave could hold Nick was to make her believe Harry was a thief and a murderer. Killing him wasn't enough."

ROWAN said quietly, "The point to remember is that Walker had all the time in the world to carry the thing out. You people just happened to find him on the ketch, but even if you hadn't, sooner or later he'd have got back aboard. Once aboard, he started trying to get his wife or Harry to admit a motive for wanting him dead. It turned out that Mrs. Walker came right out with it, but he'd have found a way to bring it out eventually, anyway. He could even have shot Harry sometime alone and claimed it was self-defense."

"Why didn't he?" Pell asked.

"Because the way he did it was safer for him. With three witnesses, there wouldn't be any question about how it had really happened. Harry would be dead, the money would be found, and his two best friends would testify his wife had admitted the love affair. Harry actually took a step toward him before he fired. He had a whole lot of points that would impress a jury—no premeditation, the unwritten law, the fact that Harry had tried to kill him the night before. He might have pleaded temporary insanity, but I doubt if the D.A. would have wanted him to go into court with much more than a manslaughter charge, if that. He might have done a year in jail at the most. I think he figured that was cheap enough if he could hold his wife."

I tried then, and I've tried later, but I still can't hate Walker for what he did. In a terrible twisted way he'd been deeply in love with Nick, and he must have watched us those last few weeks and seen clearly what was happening between us. I'd been careful, but I know now it must have shown on my face whenever I was with her. I suppose he thought of firing me but by then it was too late. It had been too late from the start.

"I could have stopped him," Lucas said, "but with the belaying pin gone and that lump on his head . . ."

"Don't start blaming yourself, George," said Pell. "It's over and done. Come on, I'll drive you home."

Lucas nodded. "Yes. It's time to go home."

He didn't look at Nick or me and they both went out without saying good-by.

ROWAN came over and put the watch on the table. There was half a glass of ice water in the pitcher and he drank that down.

"You know your job," I told him. I wanted to say more to thank him but that was the best I could do.

"We learn to be suspicious of people who go around shooting off guns, but I'd have missed it if he'd been a better shot."

I said, "All the time I was telling you about it I had an idea you thought I was lying."

He grunted. "You'd make a lousy liar, pal. And that goes for you, too, Mrs. Walker."

Nick looked up and was able to smile.

"I'll be running along," Rowan said. "You two did well. There's not much of your kind of trust around these days."

"Thank you," Nick said. "I didn't realize there was your kind of policeman around these days."

"There are enough," he said and went out.

She wiped her eyes on a corner of the bedsheet and then she saw Walker's watch on the table and her eyes filled up again.

"He couldn't stand to give up anything," she said. "Not even his watch. It was the best that money could buy."

"Murder is the last way out, Nick," I said. "It's a crazy man's way. It was the only way he could think to keep you."

"He didn't buy me, Harry. I was there on trial of my own free will. It was understood between us. I thought I could help him and . . ."

"I know how it was," I said. "We'll be starting fresh together."

"No, darling," she said. "We won't be starting like that. We'll be starting the way the lucky ones leave off."

She was right about that. The lucky ones build up their trust in each other over the years and we had ours already. —BY TIMOTHY FULLER

CARS:

LICENSED TO KILL

BY LESTER DAVID

In New York a blind man had a driver's license; in Detroit 100 licensed drivers were certifiably insane. How many of us must be killed before we do something about this?

In Chicago not long ago, a man suffered a sudden attack of dizziness in his home. He was treated by a neurologist, who diagnosed his condition as Ménière's Syndrome, a disturbance in equilibrium. The doctor told him he might lose consciousness at any time and warned him never to drive a car again.

Two weeks passed and the man felt fine. Encouraged, he began driving again. Six weeks later, he was spinning along a main highway in a neighboring state when a wave of dizziness engulfed him. He blacked out and his car swerved into the wrong lane, sideswiping an oncoming automobile. The headline next morning: "Man and Wife Killed in Crash." They had two children.

Those new orphans could have been yours. For even though you're a careful, skillful driver, you can't tell what the other guy is going to do. And the incredible truth is that today "the other guy" includes thousands of legally-licensed drivers who are insane, partially blind, or so ill emotionally or physically that they are unfit to handle a couple of tons of steel traveling at speeds up to 100 miles per hour.

Think I'm exaggerating? Listen:

»» Alan Canty, psychologist for Detroit's Traffic Court, runs a clinic to which judges refer problem drivers. Canty made a series of painstaking tests of these persons over a period of years and announced his findings only a few months ago.

One hundred license-holding motorists, he found, were certifiably insane! No less than 850 were feeble-minded. Of the rest, many were "psycho-neurotic and emotionally unstable, impulsive and irresponsible . . ."

»» Statistics compiled by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators and the American Optometric Association show that the vision of fully three million *licensed* drivers is so impaired that they take their lives in their hands—and your life as well—whenever they enter the stream of traffic.

In New York, for example, a man with only shadow perception—he could see a building, but couldn't distinguish the windows—has a driving

permit and recently took a car out for a spin on an express highway!

»» Said Norman Damon, vice president of the Automotive Safety Foundation, recently:

"The fact is that less than half of the 65 million licensed drivers in the United States have ever taken any kind of test whatsoever. The result is that we have hordes of inept drivers, many purblind or suffering from other physical and mental disabilities, challenging fate every time they take the wheel." (These untested motorists got their permits before their states began requiring examinations for licenses.)

Small wonder that each year the statisticians grind out the same highway dirge: 38,000 dead, a million bruised, disfigured or maimed for life.

In a California city, a salesman was barreling down a street toward a traffic light. The signal turned red just as he reached the intersection, but he charged ahead anyway. He smacked squarely into the side of another car coming into the crossing, killing the driver and paralyzing a passenger for life.

"I didn't see this fellow coming," the salesman pleaded in court. And he was telling the truth. He had "tunnel vision," the inability to see out of the corners of the eyes. He could only see straight ahead, just as if he were wearing blinders.

Was the salesman to blame, after all? He was completely unaware of the fact that his field of vision was severely limited—and many thousands, the American Optometric Association points out, are similarly handicapped without realizing it. He simply was never tested for tunnel vision when he took his license examination.

Which brings us to the heart of the problem:

The license-granting machinery in every state in the country is tragically inefficient. Safety experts are unanimous in their condemnation. For example:

Mr. Damon of the Automotive Safety Foundation puts it this way: "The systems remind you of the draft-examination joke in World War II—if they touch you and you're warm, you pass."

Money vs. Safety

Robert I. Catlin, chairman of the Connecticut Safety Commission, points out that most states regard the licensing function primarily as a means of raking in the shekels for the treasury rather than something that concerns public safety. "While appreciating that revenue is important," he declared in a classic of understatement, "I maintain the public interest and welfare require the elimination of unfit drivers from our highways."

There are no foolproof tests in operation anywhere in the country which will weed out persons with such major disabilities as severe asthma, dangerous types of heart disease, extremely high blood pressure, or acute diabetes.

There are no tests to weed out the psychopaths who blast off down the highways, breaking every rule in the book and eventually their own necks, taking the Lord knows how many lives before they're finished.

Of course there are many types of disabilities which prove no handicap whatsoever behind a wheel. Wounded veterans, even paraplegics, have shown beyond any doubt that, given specially equipped vehicles, they can drive *more safely* than other motorists. Former mental patients can make full recoveries and be perfectly competent at the controls of a car. And the vast majority of illnesses, doctors say, constitute no risk whatsoever to driver, pedestrian or other motorist.

But there are other illnesses that do. A report in the Bulletin of the Toronto Academy of Medicine pointed out: "It is not sufficiently realized that a motor vehicle in the hands of an individual suffering from either temporary or chronic conditions of ill health may conceivably turn out to be an instrument of death."

Dr. Leon Brody, in a report published a while back by the New York University Center for Safety Education, listed a number of illnesses that can make driving risky:

1. Depending on the stage of the condition, a venereal disease may impair judgment or neuromuscular coordination.

2. In cases of heart block, the heart occasionally stops beating for a short period, with consequent loss of consciousness.

3. At times, when the blood vessels are too relaxed and the blood pressure too low to drive the blood through the brain, fainting results. In some persons, Dr. Brody writes, this occurs fairly frequently.

4. Diabetics under insulin treatment may momentarily lose consciousness.

5. Victims of migraine have painful headaches and visual disturbances such as blurring of vision and "blind spots."

6. Individuals suffering from the condition known as narcolepsy tend to fall asleep frequently, even while talking or at work—or at the wheel of a car.

7. Epileptics of the "grand mal" type are more or less unpredictably subject to convulsions.

Many persons with these ailments voluntarily stop driving, but unfortunately, many others do not, and present licensing laws for the most part cannot ferret them out.

Even more dangerous, according to Paul H. Blaisdell, Public Safety Director of the Association of Casualty and Surety Companies, are the "moronic or mentally ill" drivers, who "will continue to menace the safety of all motorists until all states

deny them licenses." And Dr. Herman Bundesen, Chicago Health Commissioner, points out: "A large number of drivers are also emotionally unstable, and hence dangerous when operating a car."

Aren't the states doing anything to keep these unfit motorists off the roads? I put the question to a high official of a motor-vehicle bureau in an eastern state which has typical licensing laws.

He pulled out an application blank and pointed to a question. It asked whether the applicant for a driver's license had ever suffered, or was suffering from, certain illnesses.

"Suppose the person simply wrote 'no' on the form?" I asked. "Is there any way you could find out if he was telling the truth?"

He answered with a straight face: "Our examiners are trained to notice symptoms of physical illness."

I didn't laugh because only two weeks before in the official's own city, a woman who had finished shopping entered her car and, as she was taking her keys from her purse, slipped into a diabetic coma. It might have happened a minute later. . . .

Call the roll of the states and not one gives a physical or mental exam beyond the routine eye tests. Some require doctors to report cases of epilepsy, and these lists are checked against applicants for licenses. Others require that all mental patients be reported. Only last spring, New York finally tightened its rules to keep physically risky drivers off the roads. From now on, a motorist who has suffered one of several severe ailments must supply a doctor's statement that he is "capable of operating a motor vehicle on the highways in safety." But by and large, the loopholes throughout the U. S. are big enough to drive an automobile through—and thousands are.

License-renewal Loophole

One of the biggest loopholes is in license renewals. A person may be in perfect condition when he gets his permit for the first time, but during the next decade or two he can become severely handicapped. Yet to renew his license, all he has to do is write a "no" answer to the routine question asked on the renewal form. Then he can drive until the law catches up with him—*after* the accident. For example:

In 1943, an explosion at Fort Jackson, S. C., destroyed the sight of David Schnair of New York. When he was discharged from the Army, Schnair, who does public-relations work, wanted to find out just how many teeth there were in the license-renewal laws. So in 1944, when his chauffeur's permit expired, he had a friend fill out the form and write "no" to the question on whether he had suffered any disabilities. Then he went to the office of the Motor Vehicle Bureau.

He wore dark glasses and carried a cane. When he entered he went up to a guard, told him he couldn't see and asked to be guided to the proper window. Yet he received a license renewal with no trouble, just by paying his fee!

And not just once—it worked again three years later and a third time as recently as 1950. A newspaper reporter got wind of the fantastic experiment and published the story, so Schnair's license was revoked. But he told me: "It was the only thing that stopped me. If it hadn't been for the publicity, I could have kept renewing that chauffeur's license indefinitely. And I am a blind man."

Blind Licensing

Schnair, who incidentally never intended to use that license, explained to me that any blind man can do the same thing in New York and many other states, and he doesn't have to appear at the Motor Vehicle Bureau either. All he has to do is send in his renewal application by mail. An official of the New York bureau confirmed this: "The law says we must accept mail applications and we do," he said.

Blindness is an extreme case and no sightless man in his right mind would attempt to drive. Okay. But only a small handful of states require a re-examination of eyesight for license renewals, and eyes can weaken considerably as the years go on. Dangerous defects can come and still there is no check. The authorities don't find out until another accident statistic is written into the books.

Says Mr. Blaisdell of the Association of Casualty and Surety Companies: "Nearly all our controls are fashioned for the events which take place after the individual is on the highway. . . . The time has arrived to depart from the post-mortem plan of highway safety which has failed us completely and to begin a required preventative program."

Take the problem of night vision. Only a very few states check such factors as glare vision and the ability to see sizable objects after dark. Yet the estimated killing rate per vehicle is as high as four times greater in darkness than in daylight, in proportion to traffic volume.

Tests of night vision conducted among drivers who had been in accidents have shown startling results. Checkups of 321 accident repeaters in California showed they all rated "dangerously low." And three out of four of their accidents had occurred after dark. In Pennsylvania, night blindness was found in 48 per cent of one group of drivers involved in highway crackups.

Herbert J. Stack, director of the Center for Safety Education at New York University, sums it up: Bad vision at night is probably the most important single factor causing a much heavier toll among motorists and pedestrians in hours of darkness and at dusk and dawn.

But still the great majority of states do not give tests for this defect.

Get this, too: About 15 states carefully check a potential driver for tunnel vision and approximately the same number test for color blindness.

Yet the N.Y.U. Center for Safety Education has found that in one group of chronic accident repeaters, fully 58 per cent had poor side (tunnel) vision. And, a Center spokesman told me, not one case of an accident due to color blindness has ever come to the attention of the organization!

Very obviously, there is a king-sized snafu somewhere.

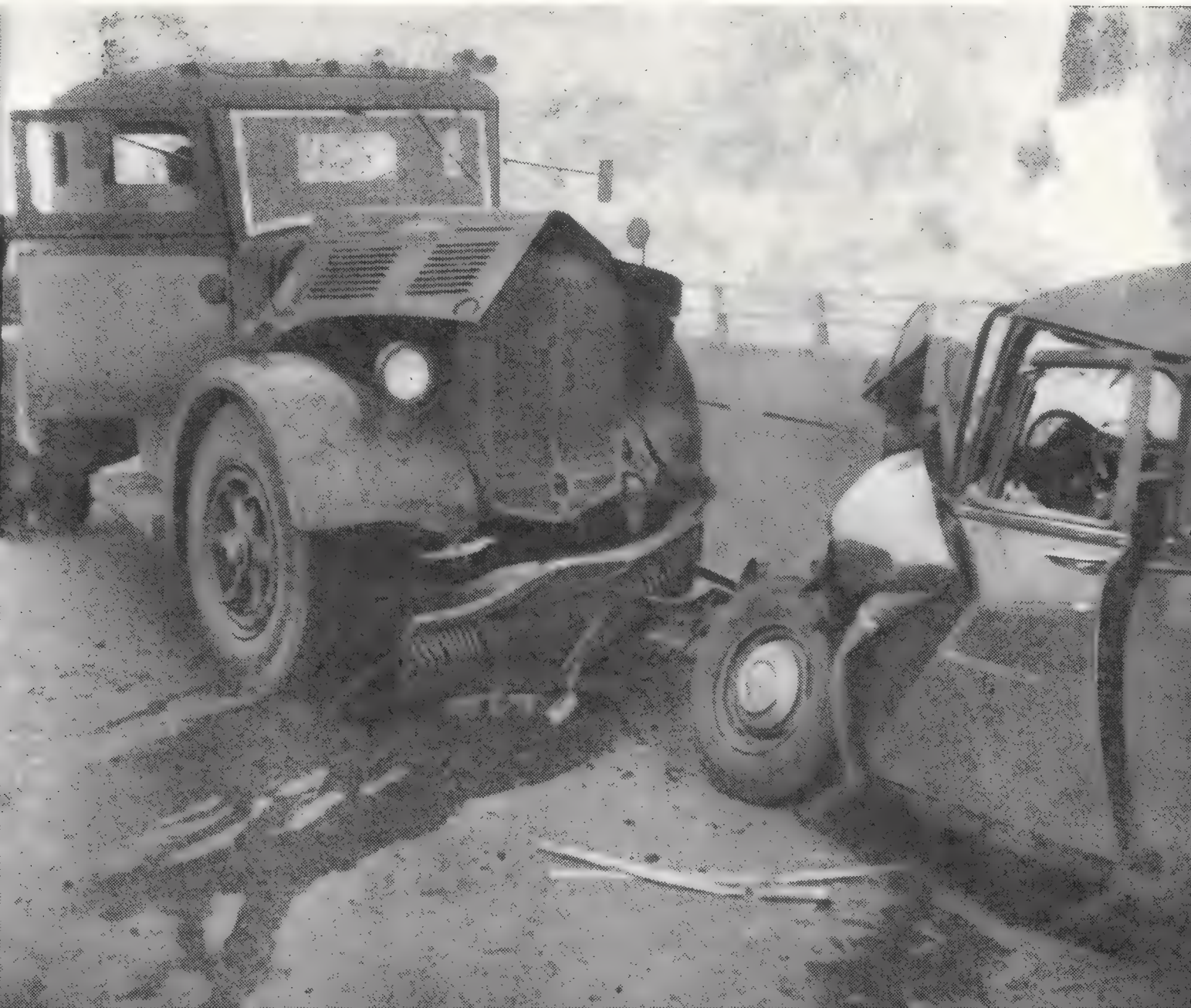
Is the situation hopeless? Paul Blaisdell doesn't think so. He offers a program of driver control that concentrates on far stricter licensing requirements and on periodic re-examinations. "Tens of thousands of unfit drivers would be weeded out by such an advanced step in human engineering," he asserts.

Here are three items in his plan:

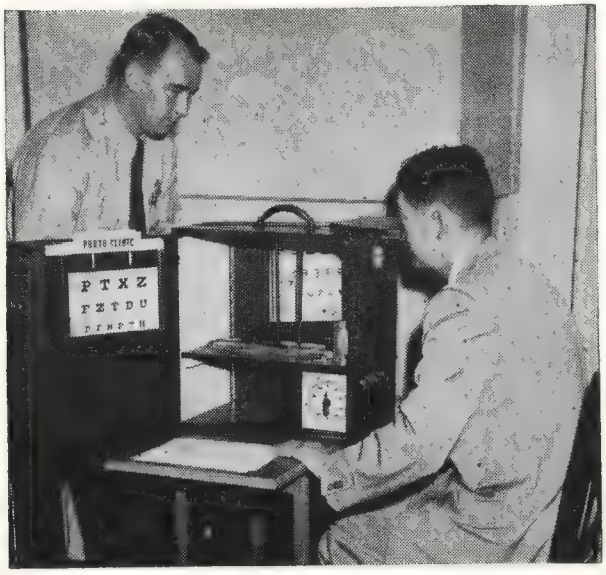
1. A physical examination that does a bit more than merely certify that the individual is breathing. It would include a complete medical history to guard against the dangers from epileptics and other equally unfortunate persons who are good and useful citizens but still not a safe risk at the controls of a 110-horsepower engine. A thorough heart examination would be required, as well as the testing of reflexes. Vision tests would be a vital part of the physical checkup and would cover both ordinary acuity and such equally vital factors as tunnel vision and depth perception. Gone, he says, would be the days of identifying eight letters on a white card. Impossible would be stunts such as the one pulled not long ago by a one-eyed applicant. Asked to cover each eye and read the chart, he simply covered the bad one each time and no one spotted the deception.

2. A psychiatric and psychological examination to provide information on mental and emo-

Though final proof was impossible, a heart attack apparently caused this Maryland tragedy. The car began to weave, crossed to the left and crashed into the truck, killing the car's driver and his wife.



Driver gets a glare-reaction test in N.J. Accident Prevention Clinic at Trenton.



Vision is tested at Clinic. The portable gear is made by Porto-Clinic Instruments.

tional stability. Mr. Blaisdell points out that tests for military service have disclosed hundreds of thousands who would be a poor gamble in the tight situations of combat. "We must be equally firm in ascertaining who cannot cope with the tight situations of heavy traffic," he says.

3. Periodic re-examination of all drivers. "This is necessitated by the obvious fact that proven ability to operate a motor vehicle at age 17 is no guarantee that the same ability will prevail at age 47 or 57 or 67."

Would this program work? Let's see what happened when the Third Avenue Transit System, operators of a large fleet of buses in New York City, put something like it into effect a few years ago in a move to correct the high rate of accidents on the line.

Dr. Harold Brandaleone, the company's medical director, believes firmly that "the medical fitness of the operator is the keynote of accident prevention" and that "a transportation company is only as good as the drivers who operate its vehicles."

So he reorganized the company's medical department in 1947 to provide: (1) rigid pre-employment examinations, (2) extended medical service for all employees, and (3) regular periodic examinations of drivers.

What happened?

In 1946, the company had racked up 10,178 accidents. Five years later, there were only 5,669, a slash of almost 50 per cent!

"These services," reports Dr. Brandaleone, "improved the health of the employees, decreased the accident rate and saved the company a large sum of money."

Not long ago, the Interstate Commerce Commission ordered each driver under its jurisdiction to undergo a periodic health examination. It's an annual test of eyesight, reflexes, mental health—the works. The result has been a startling reduction of accidents.

On the basis of this evidence, it's pretty safe to assume that a similar program applied to drivers of passenger cars would also bring dramatic results. But wouldn't the cost be high, as many critics contend? Sure. Would the program be worth it?

Paying Off in Lives

Says Dr. Brandaleone: "The annual cost of maintaining a good medical department where all operators can be examined and treated is less than the cost of one severe accident."

And Charles Ray, vice president of Markel Service, Inc., the safety arm of the American Fidelity & Casualty Co., the world's largest insurer of trucks and buses, told me:

"As far as drivers of commercial vehicles are concerned, the cost of yearly health examinations is practically nothing compared to the extensive savings in lives and property. As for passenger-car drivers, the proper types of examinations, given at the proper times, will certainly pay for themselves in terms of more human beings left alive, considerably less carnage and considerably less all-around expense."

"Why," asks Paul Blaisdell, "will a driver wilfully expose himself, his family and others to the dangers of his performance at the wheel when he knows that his eyesight or his heart or some other physical condition makes him unfit to be on the road?"

"Why?" asks a young woman I know, who is working at home as a seamstress to make ends meet for herself and three small children. Last year she buried her husband. He was killed in a head-on crash with a driver who, knowing he had a serious heart condition, suffered an attack at the wheel.

How many others have to die before we wise up?

—By Lester David

The NEW SPURS

BY RICHARD WORMSER

Larry was going to desert from the Army to be with his easy-money brother. But someone was selling liquor to the Sioux.

COMING OFF the river ferry, the mud of the day's thaw spurting up around his new boots and spurs, Larry Moone looked down at the yellow stripes on his legs and thought it was sure funny.

Of the 12 recruits assigned to Company J for winter training, he was one of four chosen to be a trooper. The others would be shipped out tomorrow to the infantry or the quartermaster's or some place.

And it was First Sergeant Nellis, of all people, who had had the captain make Larry a trooper, complete with spurs and leg stripes and a yellow neckerchief—First Sergeant Nellis, who'd kept Larry in barracks all winter without a pass and whom Larry had hated since the sergeant had made the recruits walk 30 miles from railhead last January.

Now Company J was giving a smoker in honor of its four new yellowlegs. But tomorrow there'd be only three. Larry Moone was going over the hill.

His brother Jonathan was in this town; had to be, if he was in North Dakota, for there wasn't any other town around. Soon he and Jonathan'd be together again, like they'd always been.

Smitty Schmidt, who had the next bunk to him in barracks, banged him on the shoulder and whooped: "Hey, Larry! Gunna drink the whole town dry, huh?"

Larry grunted something and managed to smile. Maybe it wasn't honest, running out on the Army after they'd brought him to North Dakota. But he'd paid for the railroad ticket they bought. Paid for it before he ever got to barracks by sleeping out on ground frozen so hard it had rung like a bell when struck by the shoes of the sergeant's horse. Paid for it in three months of never getting a pass or seeing a girl.

Smitty bawled again: "Hey, troopers! Who's the best troop in the cavalry?"

First Sergeant Nellis said drily: "You got an early start, Schmidt." Nellis dropped a hand on Larry's shoulder. "How you doin', trooper?"

The day-old title made Larry pull his shoulders back. But he said: "Doin' fine, sarge," and admired himself for getting that familiar with the first sergeant.

The Ice House Bar, where they were headed, was on the river bank; a block away ran the main street of the city, where the nice people, the civilians, could keep out of river-bank mud. At a cross street, Larry looked over and he could see the flaring naphthalene lights of the store fronts. Three months since he'd seen anything like that. He stopped, as though to fix his spur strap, and the company went on without him.

There were no street lamps on the cross streets; there were no boardwalks, either. He walked close to the houses to keep his boots out of the mud and water that roiled slowly down the ruts. Spring had really come in a hurry. It was hard to remember that only 10 days ago a man with a pass had had to walk across the frozen river, hanging onto the rope that now guided the ferryboat. Or so they had told him.

He turned into Main Street sharply, aware of his spurs and his bright yellow neckerchief. He went past the hat store, the Bon Ton Drygoods Company, and the shop of the tailor who made uni-

forms for the men who were too natty to wear government issue. You could buy civilians there too, and once you were dressed in those, who'd find you in the howling miles of the Dakotas?

Across the street was a hotel, the U. S. Grant House. Tied in front of it was Captain Hyatt's horse, Montezuma. Tomorrow was Larry's day to groom Monty. He hoped, idly, he wouldn't get kicked, like the last time. Then he remembered that he wouldn't be around tomorrow if he found Jonathan. And this town wasn't so big but what somebody'd know Jonathan.

He hurried on, because in the next block a piano was tinkling, and the singing voices were those of girls. It was a sad song, one they used to sing back in Indiana. He could remember most of the words: *"Do they think of me at home, me who used to share their—"* No, he really couldn't remember.

He turned into the bar, his breath catching, because even with the spurs and neckerchief, the bartender might ask him how old he was. He put one elbow down firmly on the wood and stared around. The piano was at the back of the place, with two kerosene lamps set on the top, and behind it there was a little platform. Three girls were standing on it, their arms around each other, their heads close together. The one in the middle had yellow hair. *"Do they think of me at home, do they ever think of me—?"* He'd left out a line. That was why he hadn't been able to make it come out right.

Somebody coughed in front of him, and he saw that the bartender had served him a little glass of red-eye. "Two bits, please," said the bartender.

Life was sure expensive on the outside. All he had to do was go back to the Ice House and drink all he wanted for nothing. He started to say, "Do you know a fella—" But the bartender had rung up his quarter and gone back to talk to a couple of plainsmen down the bar. He'd have to spend another two bits to ask his question, Larry saw.

The three girls finished up and the piano player hit a hard lick at the keyboard, and then seemed to go to sleep.

The blonde girl in the middle promptly turned around and walked off the platform and through a door. The two dark-haired girls bent down and blew out the kerosene lamps. Then each picked up a tin plate. One of them headed for the table at the back, where a bunch of civilians were pushing cards and poker chips at each other.

Larry thought she wouldn't make much money off them since they hadn't even looked up during the singing. Then he saw the other dark-haired girl heading for the bar.

If he didn't get out of there, it was going to cost him worse than the two bits he'd already spent.

He wanted to leave, but he hadn't asked his question yet. He hadn't even swallowed the whiskey. He gulped it down, and the dark-haired girl had gotten past the two plainsmen who were now talking to each other. The bartender was carrying a bottle and some glasses through the door where the blonde girl had gone. Larry nodded; it confirmed his ideas about the sort of life a girl would lead in a place like this.

The dark-haired girl got a coin from each of the whiskered civilians, then reached Larry. He was still choking from the drink, but he fumbled in his pocket, came up with a dime, and dropped it in her tin plate. She looked down at it.

"Big spender, aren't you, captain?"

Larry said, "I ain't a captain and you know it."

"No? I didn't think no ordinary soldier could throw his pay around like that."

Larry said, "Listen, sister, I'm looking for a friend. Do you know a fella named Jonathan—" But he stopped; she wasn't listening to him.

She had slid the few coins off the plate, pulled the front of her dress out, and, with the other hand, let the coins slide slowly down someplace inside. She continued holding her dress out that way for a minute; she was a lot shorter than he was, and he felt his face getting red. Then she let her dress go, and slid the tin plate down the counter, out of her way.

The bartender, coming back from the back room, caught it, and put it below the bar. Then he came down the bar towards them. "Having trouble, Lottie?"

"This yalla-leg won't keep his hands to himself."

Larry gaped. "I just asked her if she knew my brother Jonathan." He poured himself another drink, and threw out a quarter trying to keep out of trouble.

The bartender said, "We don't know no appleknockers and we don't want no trouble with the sojers, mister. Jus' give the lady a dollar fer her troubles, and fergit it."

"A dollar?" Larry wished he didn't have the spurs on. When he'd gotten them, First Sergeant Nellis had warned him never to fight in them; they got in a man's way.

"For her time," the bartender said. "You called her over to talk to you." He brought his right hand up from under the bar. There was a piece of pick handle in it, sawed off. You could see where it had been bored and lead poured in the middle.

The bartender said, "We ain't too anxious to cater to the troops, anyways. Gives our reg'lar trade the jumps, lookin' at all that blue cloth."

The door the blonde girl had gone through opened. There'd be a lot more of them back there. If he got in a fight, his new trooper's uniform'd get

messed up, and he'd be washing dishes and grooming officers' horses for a month. Worse, if he got beaten up by civilians, he might be broken back to recruit, or even transferred to the infantry.

He made a quick grab across the bar and caught the bartender's right wrist before he could swing the billybat. The bartender started up with his left fist, which is what Larry expected. Using a trick that Corporal Hagen had taught them in the day room, he quickly twisted the bartender's wrist and the billybat sharply rapped the man's left knuckles.

But just then the dark-haired girl kicked Larry in the shins.

Hagen, Trooper Reilly and the rest had never told him what to do in a case like this. So he made up something; he used his elbow to flip his full glass of whiskey into the girl's face. It seemed more gentlemanly than hitting her.

SHE doubled up, spitting, and he made the mistake of looking at her a minute, and the bartender used his banged-up left hand to crack Larry on the chest. Larry's wind started to go away, and he reeled back and made a grab for a chair. One of the plainsmen tripped him.

When he got to his feet, the two plainsmen and the bartender and three guys from the poker game were all around him, and he knew that about all he could do was take his lumps like a trooper. If enough hooraw grew up out of all this, Company J might hear it down at the Ice House. But it didn't seem likely. He doubled up his fists and wished he hadn't worn his spurs.

The dark-haired girl said, "Drown him in his own spit, boys."

Then another woman's voice said, "You shut your gab, Lottie. Jase, you give these gents one on the house for helping you, And you, soldier, come with me." It was the blonde girl who'd come out of the back room. She was holding a drink and smiling at him.

He said, "That's all right, lady, I'm holding my own."

The blonde girl was sure pretty. She said, "We can't afford to get our bar broken up, trooper. You come with me." She turned to the others. "Johnny wants to talk to him."

Whoever this Johnny was, he must have been something; for they all got back to what they'd been doing quick. Larry followed the blonde, and he made his spurs jingle when he walked.

She held the door for him, and he said, "After you, lady," real polite. But she shook her head.

"I'm not invited, soldier."

He was trying to figure this out when he went through the door. She closed it behind him, and he turned real quick, because if this was a trick to get him where he could be whipped up easier, he still had some fight in him.

A man's voice said: "Sit down, Larry," and he turned back and saw the man at the table for the first time.

It was a second or two before he knew that the man with the long hair and the long mustaches and the buckskin jacket was his brother Jonathan.

"You can straighten your hands out," Jonathan said. "There won't be no fight. I own this place." He shook his head. "You've grown up nearly as big as I am, Larry. When did you join the Army?"

"Paw died last fall," Larry said. "Mother and I moved into town with Aunt Beck. For a couple of months I worked for Uncle Ed."

Jonathan made a face. He poured himself a drink from the bottle Larry had seen brought in here. "Uncle Ed," he said. "He still talkin' about me?"

Larry said, "It made it hard, working for him. Every time I went near the till, he'd kinda sidle over to see was I helping myself."

Jonathan stretched, laughing. He'd always been about the handsomest man in Indiana; in his fancy duds, he was even better looking. His eyes narrowed like a cat's when he laughed. "Maybe he didn't think you had an honest phiz, Larry."

Larry said, "It was on accounta you jumping town with all that money."

Jonathan stopped laughing. "Sit down," he said. "You used to be scared of me, brother."

Larry slowly sat down. He pulled his blouse down so's it wouldn't wrinkle, and straightened his neck cloth. "Don't know but what I still am," he said. "But it ain't fittin' for a cavalry trooper to be afraid, Jonathan." He had started to slump like a—like a farmhand. He sat up straighter.

MY name isn't Jonathan," Jonathan said. He poured himself another shot. "It's Johnny Knight. Moone to Knight, that's not much change."

Larry nodded. "You had no call to do that, Jonathan," he said. His brother's face twisted at the name. "Uncle Ed's not the sort to send the sheriff after his own kin. Don't it feel queer using a name's not your own?"

"No queerer than wearin' clothes not your own," Jonathan said. "Clothes that are the gov'ment's."

Larry said, "We ain't allowed to wear tailor-mades when we're recruits. I'm only a trooper as of today."

Jonathan shook his head, laughing, and all of a sudden he was the big brother that Larry used to tag after. "Hooraw for you," Jonathan said. He reached in his pocket, pulled out a long snap purse; he dumped it on the table, and gold pieces rolled around. Jonathan slapped them flat with the palm of his hand, and slid two over to Larry. "Two months' pay in the Army. Take 'em. I own this place. How'd you find me?"

Larry let the $40 lie. He said, "Asked around the saloon. You was always one for hangin' around saloons. Didn't think you'd own one so soon."

Jonathan laughed again. "Sure. I'm a smart fella. Come in here anytime. All you can drink, for free, and if you want a gal, Mona'll get you one."

Larry said, "Mona's the lady brought me in here?"

Jonathan said, "The blonde, yeah. Though I don't know's she'd answer if you called her a lady. Funny, you'n me ending up here together."

Larry brightened at the word together. "Not so funny," he said. "The Army let me enlist for Dakota. They let you say where you want to go."

"Sure," Jonathan said. "Sure. The way they pay, they got to give you some breaks. . . . Why, out here, a man can shoot himself $100 worth of buffalo skins a day."

Larry hooked his thumbs into his belt. "That the trade you're following?"

Jonathan just shook his head, pouring himself another drink.

Larry looked at the gold pieces on the table. "You done well, Johnny. I reckon you make more in a week than my first sergeant makes in a month; and first sergeant's the best I can hope to be even if I get real smart at soldiering."

Jonathan chuckled. "I just about knew I couldn't have a fool for a brother," he said. "It's just about superfine that you showed up, Larry. I always meant to write and send you a ticket on the railway cars, but I didn't know you'd take it. Look . . ."

THERE was a knock on the door. The smile faded from Jonathan's face, and he looked a lot older than 25. His hand fell into his lap, near the gun tied to his thigh. He said, "Come in," and his voice was a lot different from when he'd been talking to Larry.

But it was only Mona who came in, and Jonathan's hand fell away from his gun. The pretty gal said, "Those two riders gotta go, Johnny. They haven't had their little talk with you yet."

Jonathan said, "You can speak open in front of my bud, here. This is my brother Larry, Mona."

Mona said, "Glad to know you, Captain Knight."

"It's Trooper Moone, miss," Larry said.

Jonathan's face got bad again.

Jonathan said, finally, "It's all right if it's just Mona, Larry. But don't go spreading my real name too far."

Larry said, "I guess it's more than Uncle Ed you're scared of, Johnny."

"I've got to pay off those men," Jonathan said. "Why, yeah. The kinda threat Uncle Ed is, I don't pay it any rabbit-tail mind." He went out to the bar, closing the door behind him.

Mona came and sat on the edge of the table, swinging one foot. Those were real silk stockings, but he didn't think the diamonds on her shoe buckles were real. She played with the two gold coins Jonathan had left. She said, "You've made Johnny Knight real happy, kid. You coming into the business with us?"

"I'm in the Army."

SHE put a hand on his shoulder. "Johnny'll buy you out. It only costs about $200. We can have fun, Larry . . . . It is Larry, isn't it?"

"Sure."

"You don't talk much, do you? I've got a girl in St. Louis—we sang together and look like sisters. I'll send for her. You'd like a gal who looked like my sister, wouldn't you?"

Larry cleared his throat. Her hand was still on his shoulder. How do you tell a girl that you've dreamed of her all winter when you've never seen her before? You can't do it any more than you can tell a brother that home was no good after he ran away. He thought it over and said, "If she looked enough like you, I'd like it fine."

"Hey, boy, you don't have to say much." Mona leaned over and kissed him on the forehead. "There aren't any flies on either of the Knight boys, are there?"

He didn't bother to say his name was Moone. She already knew that, and there wasn't much use in saying things over again, like civilians did. "Wish Johnny Knight'd get tired of me. You and I could have fun," Mona said. "You're gonna make big money, Larry Knight. You know what Johnny's paying those two whiskey riders? $3,000 apiece."

Larry gulped. Now that he was a full trooper, his pay would be $18 a month. "What for?"

"Just staying out on the reservation all winter," Mona said, idly. She ran her hand down his blue arm, then reached over and straightened his neckerchief for him. "Johnny's got a depot out there. Or did he tell you, cap?" She laughed. "Think I'll call you cap. Every veteran around here calls himself captain."

Larry couldn't help but like the sound of it. But he skipped all that, and went back to the meat. He said, "Depot? You mean Jonathan's selling likker to the Sioux?"

"If you can call it liquor," she said. "He makes it in the back warehouse. Tobacco juice and pepper sauce, and straight alcohol and water."

Larry felt himself getting cold. Allowing for the fact that old hands talked big to scare new recruits, there was probably still a lot of truth in the barracks-room stories about what Sioux did when they got full of moonshine. Dog soldiers, they called the Sioux.

He shook Mona's hand off his neck and stood up. All those men outside were wearing pistols,

Larry brought one up from somewhere around his waist, and his brother went wheeling backward.

and soldiers off duty didn't bring their guns to town. But he had to stop those men. He ought to go across the street, where Captain Hyatt was, and report. Then they'd turn Company J out of the Ice House, and clean up the whole bunch.

He shook his head. He was through with the Army. Let them fight their own battles. Company J alone was good enough to handle all the dog soldiers on the prairie.

But Company J was under strength. They'd lost 12 men last spring in a patrol. Lost them to Sioux, to lousy firewater dog soldiers. Larry and Smitty and the other two just made up four of the shorts. Eight more troopers would be picked out of the spring draft of recruits.

A lot of yellowlegs were dead and scalped because the dog soldiers had been sold firewater.

Mona said, "What are you thinking about, Cap?"

He said, "Thinkin' about you, sweet face," and bent down, put his arm around her shoulders, and kissed her, hard and good. Considering how long it had been that he had been dreaming about doing just this with a gal who looked just like Mona, he wasn't getting much pleasure out of it. He tried to get his mind away from the door which

was going to let Jonathan back into the room pretty soon.

"Oh, cap," Mona said. She put her hands on the back of his neck and pulled him to her.

Then she was trying to push away, muttering, "Johnny'll be back, cap, lemme go—" But he hung on hard. She twisted against him, trying to get away, and he had to admit to himself it felt pretty good, even while he was thinking about the door and Jonathan.

He had time for some pretty good kissing before that door finally opened. It slammed right away again, and Jonathan was talking like Johnny Knight when he said, "Hey, kid, that's my girl."

Larry let Mona go. He'd never been very smart, but he'd made up his mind now. "No, she ain't," he said. "Usta be, but no more. She's mine now, Jonathan."

"Now, wait a minute, boy," Jonathan said.

Larry said, "Take off that gun and I'll take off my spurs, and we'll see." He managed to laugh. "I'm growed up, now, Jonathan."

While he talked, he was being fast with his fingers on the spur straps. The first one came off, and then the second, and he hung them carefully on the point of a chair back, and felt a lot better. He said, "Come on, Jonathan."

Jonathan's hands were on his gunbelt. But he wasn't unbuckling it. He said, "Bud, she ain't worth—" and then he didn't say anything more, because Larry hit him.

It wasn't too easy to do. Even with the long hair and the fancy leather coat, the face was still Jonathan's.

Jonathan stopped fiddle-faddling with the belt buckle, and swung back. He missed Larry's face but got him in the shoulder. The blow gave Larry a pretty good idea of Jonathan's strength, which was considerable.

Then they closed and started pounding at each other's bellies, and Larry felt the skin go from his knuckles as they slid along Jonathan's cartridge belt. But Larry's big U. S. buckle with the crossed swords was in the way of Jonathan's fists, too.

They broke and Jonathan swung at his waist with a boot. Larry jumped back just in time to keep the toe from gutting him. He brought one up from somewhere around his waist while Jonathan was still off balance, and his brother went wheeling backwards, knocking over the chair on which Larry had hung his spurs.

It occurred to Larry that he was going to get his uniform torn. Maybe he should have gone in and given the boots to Jonathan; but instead, he took the time while the older Moone was getting up to unbuckle his belt and his coat, hang them on a chair and put the chair in a corner.

Jonathan got to his feet and stood swaying and blinking. There was a mark over his left eye that was going to puff up pretty soon. He was breathing hard.

"What's this all about, Larry? Give you money, offer you a good job, and you start whopping on me."

"It's me," Mona said. "He wants me, too."

Larry laughed. The sound of it in his own ears was tinny. He said, "Naw. One saloon gal or another, what difference does it make? I'm gonna drive you out of town, Jonathan. You're gonna be known as the fella who got the britches beaten off of him by his kid brother. That'll drive you clear off the plains."

Jonathan was getting his breath back. He blew between his puffy lips. "But why?"

"Many's the soldier you've killed, selling rotgut to the Sioux. Many's the cavalryman."

"You talk like a preacher," Jonathan said. His face was getting mean.

"Maybe so," Larry said. "And maybe some of it's for the months I worked for Uncle Ed for nothing, paying back what you took."

"You're a fool," Jonathan said, and started wading in again.

They fought flatfooted this time, no fancy-danning around, no trick dancing. The table went over, and the rest of the chairs, though Larry fought hard to try and save the one that held his blouse and coat.

Then Jonathan began to fold around the middle, and Larry took a deep breath. It was hard for a man to beat up his own brother. But it hadn't been easy walking 30 miles from the railroad on the frozen ground. It hadn't been easy standing guard duty in a blizzard. When a man had something to do, he had to do it.

Finally Jonathan went down. He turned over and lay on his face.

Larry took whiskey from the bottle in the corner. As he rubbed it on his cut-up face and hands, he thought, through the stinging, that it was a miracle the bottle hadn't broken.

He said to Mona, "He's got a lot of vanity. Always had. He won't stay around here with that face. Not him, with his pride."

"That's right," the girl said. She pulled the table upright and sat on it. "A lot of pride, Johnny Knight. . . . I got some, too." She ran her hand over her hair. "You didn't mean that, about not wanting me?"

Larry said, "If you're working in town, I'd be proud to see you, next pass I get." He felt very sorry for her. He felt sorry for Jonathan, too.

But later, at the Ice House, all he told them was he'd fought with a fellow over a girl. He did a lot of singing that night, and a lot of drinking, and the liquor stayed down real good. He guessed maybe he'd grown up into a man, a real yellow-leg man.

—By Richard Wormser

MEDICAL REPORT

By Lawrence Galton

MUSCLE-DESTROYER: In a New York hospital not long ago, doctors had just about given up hope for a 46-year-old man. Despite two years of hospitalization and every known treatment, he had been reduced almost to a vegetable state by myasthenia gravis, a mysterious disease that weakens muscles. He couldn't walk, could hardly see, speak, chew or swallow.

As a last resort, the doctors gave him a new drug, Mestinon. In 24 hours the man was eating with relish, walking without assistance. Later he regained control of his eyes and his speech improved.

Only one drug, neostigmine, has ever proved of even limited value for the disease, and that drug sometimes made matters worse by causing side effects of diarrhea and cramps. Mestinon is not only more effective than neostigmine, but also more gentle. In first tests, it helped 19 of 20 patients, later worked about as well for another 35 patients, according to the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (155:961).

PINNING THE BLAME: Finding a cause is often better than finding a cure—especially when the troublemaker can be avoided. Recently, medical researchers have tracked down readily-avoidable causes for three increasingly common problems:

» *Waterless hand cleaners* are culprits in hand skin disease. Many cleaners, widely used in industrial plants and in some home workshops, are based on cold cream, soap or synthetic detergents. But the only waterless cleaner of value to the "really dirty worker," according to a report in the *Archives of Hygiene and Occupational Medicine* (June), is one based on such solvents as kerosene or benzine. These sensitize and irritate at the same time. Besides that, a kerosene-based cleaner is just "an expensive method of using kerosene [to clean the] skin . . ."

» *Nylon hosiery* or hose with nylon reinforcement in toes and heels is often to blame for reddened and swollen feet, with tender, burning white patches on and about the soles, and excessive sweating. That's what an Iowa University physician reports (*A.M.A. Archives of Dermatology* 69:709). And, because the trouble seems to be nylon's lack of absorbency, nylon fabrics may be involved in other disorders in which sweating is a factor.

» *Popcorn* frequently causes simple rectal bleeding—and sometimes more complicated trouble, a specialist reports in *Proctology* (18:117). Roasted corn, when not thoroughly chewed, leaves sharp, sizeable kernels that may tear into the bowel wall, making it bleed. Avoiding roughage in the diet for a week often brings healing.

HELP FROM PRISON: Many a GI in World War II and Korea became acquainted with a miserable liver infection called viral hepatitis. It now seems to be getting more common among civilians. Every year thousands pick it up and suffer long bouts of jaundice, fever, abdominal pain and upset. Usually, recovery takes six to eight weeks, but many victims don't get fully well for a year, and about 15 per cent have relapses. Doctors have used a protein diet to try to speed recovery, but no one actually knew how much good the diet did. Now, with the help of prisoner volunteers who took part in the first controlled test, the answer is in.

Of the 67 human guinea pigs who allowed themselves to be infected with the disease, 32 got the special diet and 35 were allowed to eat as they pleased. Among the 32 on the diet, 18 were very sick, suffered relapses and complications and took long to get well. Four went into coma and one died. But among the non-dieters, there were no deaths, no comas, no severe complications. Only seven had relapses or prolonged illness. The rest recovered quickly after a short period of acute infection. For a tough disease, still without a neat one-shot cure, the human guinea pigs have, at least, shown up a faulty and unpleasant treatment.

BRIEFS: A curb-climbing wheel chair, developed by New York University engineers for the Polio Foundation, will cost only 30 per cent more than ordinary chairs, let chair-bound patients navigate easily on the streets . . . Darstine (Sharpe & Dohme), new anti-ulcer drug, has helped some peptic ulcer victims when other treatments failed (*Gastroenterology* 26:758) . . . Dolitrone (Merrill), a unique new anesthetic, deadens pain during an operation, yet leaves the patient conscious, able to move and help the surgeon . . . Antihistamines have been found to lower sugar in the blood, making them helpful for diabetics (*American Journal of Digestive Diseases* 21:160) . . . Benadryl, an antihistamine, has effectively controlled vertigo in patients who get that dizzying sensation. It helps stop nausea and vomiting, too (*Laryngoscope* 64:345).

Like all medical advances, those reported here are not 100 per cent cure-all. Only your doctor is qualified to judge whether a new development may help in your own particular case. For further advice, see him.

Tips on Building Your

BY GEORGE SCULLIN

Boats that come ready to assemble are seaworthy, inexpensive and easy to put together—if you don't make the wild mistakes some people have.

ONE WEEKEND last summer a school of bluefish was reported off Crane's Neck, a peaceful Long Island promontory whose last flurry of excitement came with the sighting of a whale there in 1893. Within an hour after the radioed tip, boats began converging upon the scene in what just a year ago would have been regarded as a most unusual manner. They came in a cloud of dust through village and town like Minute Men closing in on Lexington. There were boats on top of cars and boats inside cars. There were boats riding stern-high in station wagons and pickup trucks, and there were boats breasting the hills in their own custom-built trailers.

In one village where the nautical traffic jam was becoming acute, the baffled local cop remarked, "I still don't know if I should call the State Police for help or the Coast Guard." Then he grinned. "But I'm getting used to it. The first time I saw so many people rushing their boats to the bay like this, I thought the island was sinking."

Came then the question that has baffled observers from one coast to the other, and from north to south, not excluding the Great American Desert. "What I don't get," said the cop, "is where all these boats are coming from. They weren't here last year."

That they weren't. In future years, when sociologists get around to analyzing the aquatic changes in the American way of life, the chances are good that they will refer to 1954 as "The Year of the Great Launching." There has been nothing like it marine-wise since Noah launched his ark, and nothing like it home-wise since Mah Jong. For the most remarkable part of the entire phenomenon is that tens of thousands of the new boats, from seven-foot prams to 31-foot cabin cruisers, were built last winter, not in professional boat yards—though they, too, were humming from coast to coast—but in the home.

Behind this awesome, lemming-like invasion of ocean, lake and river is the kit boat, or boat kit, or, to describe it more fully, the packaged boat that comes to you in knocked-down shape, its pre-cut parts ready for immediate assembly in your basement, garage or spare room. All kits are complete

to the last screw, and some even include the screwdriver.

If you are one who has yearned to skipper your own boat, but has had some misgivings about your ability to cope with such esoteric items as splines, chines, strakes and keelsons, we have assembled here some words of good cheer. The consensus among authorities seems to be that, what with the way kit boats have been perfected of late, there's as much sport to be found in putting a boat together as there is in sailing it later.

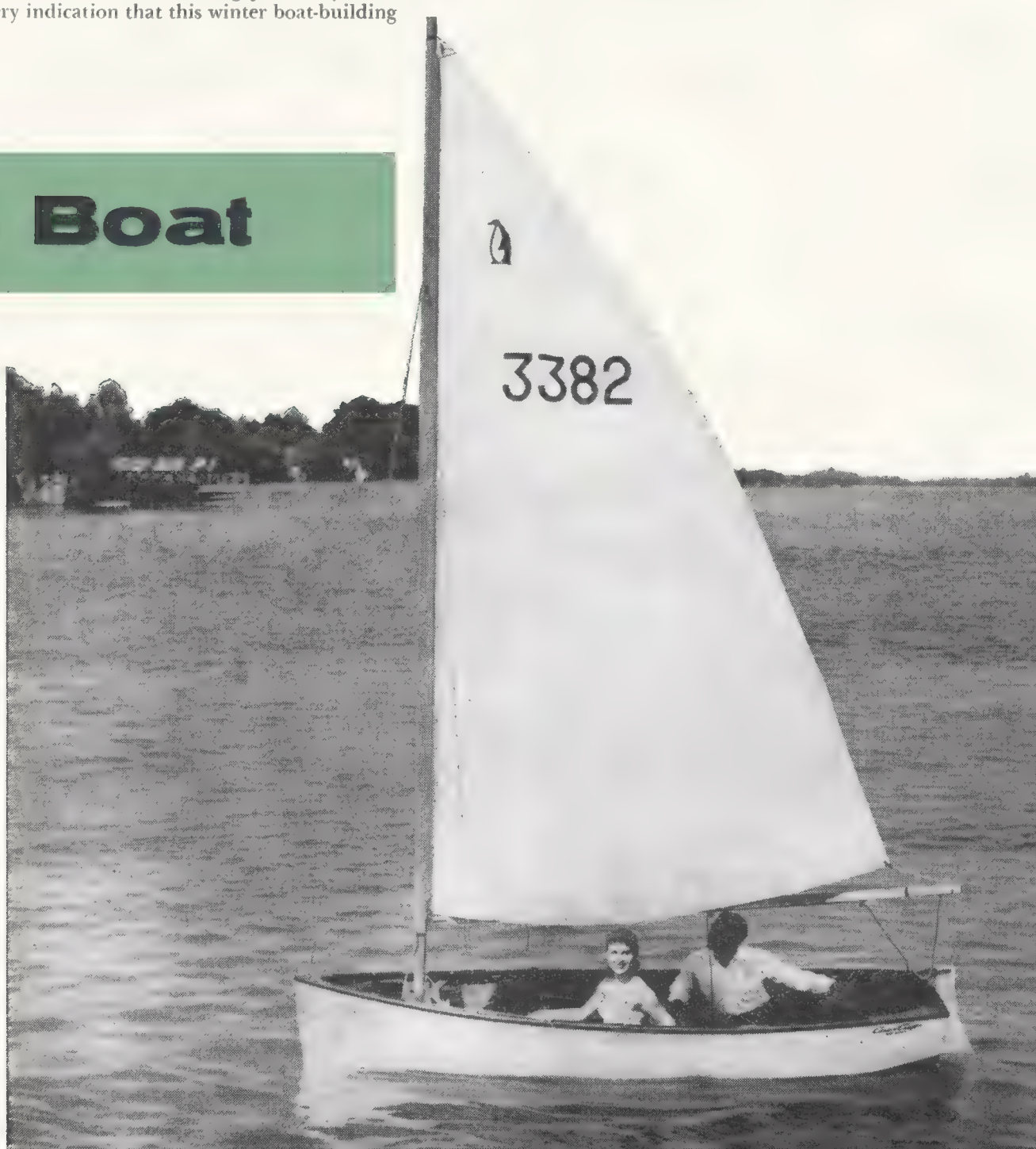
Or, as the spokesman for one supplier of boat kits puts it, "While we go along with the theory that in assembling our kits, the more experience the better, we have the record of our customers to prove that no experience is necessary." To which he could not refrain from adding jubilantly, "We have every indication that this winter boat-building will become the fastest-growing indoor sport in America."

This is a brave statement, but it is more than confirmed by a rival spokesman who reports, "While I cannot divulge the actual sales figures, it's no secret that sales of almost every manufacturer have doubled and tripled in the last three years."

But even this is not the whole story. As the sales per manufacturer have shot up 200 to 300 per cent, the number of manufacturers has tripled. All of which means they must have something that is more than passing good.

After learning what we could of the manufacturers' efforts to make their kits foolproof, we went to our own expert to find out just how foolproof the kits actually are. Our expert in this case is

Kit Boat



Ed Emerson, a young man of Northport, Long Island, whose Emerson Boat shop is a headquarters for amateur boat-builders for some 30 miles around. Ed, together with his right-hand man, Jim Wilkes, has probably assembled more kit boats of all sizes and degrees of complexity than anyone else in the country, but his craftsmanship is based on a lot more than mere volume.

As a native New Englander, Ed is of the sea salty. During the war, he rose to the command of his own vessel on some of the toughest cargo runs the North Atlantic had to offer though he was barely out of his teens. Somewhere in the course of his travels, he got the kayak bug. After designing and building one of his own, he took it on a shake-down cruise that involved 150 miles of solitary paddling on the high seas between Northport and Boston. The kayak stood up to his rigid requirements in fine shape, even when he put it through surf that would have made kindling of any less sporty craft. He still thinks a kayak can offer more real thrills in riding rough water than anything else, but even before he could get into production the small boat boom was sweeping across the country. Where there was one customer who wanted to combine the thrills of surf boarding and water skiing in a kayak, there seemed to be unlimited numbers wanting the more companionable type of boat that could hold a couple of fishermen and have room to spare for the fish.

Ed started out conventionally enough, building his boats as they have been built in New England for centuries. At the same time he sold a few kits to customers who didn't want to wait a couple of years until he could get around to filling their orders. When the demand became even greater, with the emphasis on boats light enough to be carried by trailer or on the car top, he saw no point in resisting the trend any longer. He and Jim Wilkes ordered a flock of kits and went into production on an assembly line basis, turning out completed boats by the dozen in all shapes and sizes. In the meantime, they served as a central information center, solving problems for those customers who preferred to assemble their own kits. Thus when Ed and Jim talk, it is with the authority of professionals whose experiences with amateur builders have made them familiar with just about every mistake that can be made.

Not Designed to Sink

About kits in general, Ed says, "The first thing customers want to know is whether a kit boat is any good after it's built. They're afraid that because the price is so low, the boat will be shoddy. That just isn't so. The kit builders buy their lumber in such large quantities, and waste so little of it, that in many instances you can buy a kit for less than the wood would cost you at your local lumber yard. Not only that but each design—be it pram, skiff, sailboat, cabin cruiser or the dozens of others available—is the product of a competent naval architect. And it has been tested for seaworthiness before it is put on the market."

It would appear, then, that the only unknown factor between the delivery of the kit and the launching of a perfect boat is you. What happens after you open that wonderful package, and a jigsaw puzzle of pre-cut parts falls out on the floor?

Let's say you've decided on the highly popular 12-foot rowboat that cruises beautifully when possessed of a five h.p. outboard motor. You chose it because it weighs only 89 pounds, carries three fishermen comfortably, rides lightly on the top of the car, and costs only about $69 at the factory. It's a small boat. But if you put it together in an apartment dinette, it will be just about the biggest piece of furniture you've ever seen in your life.

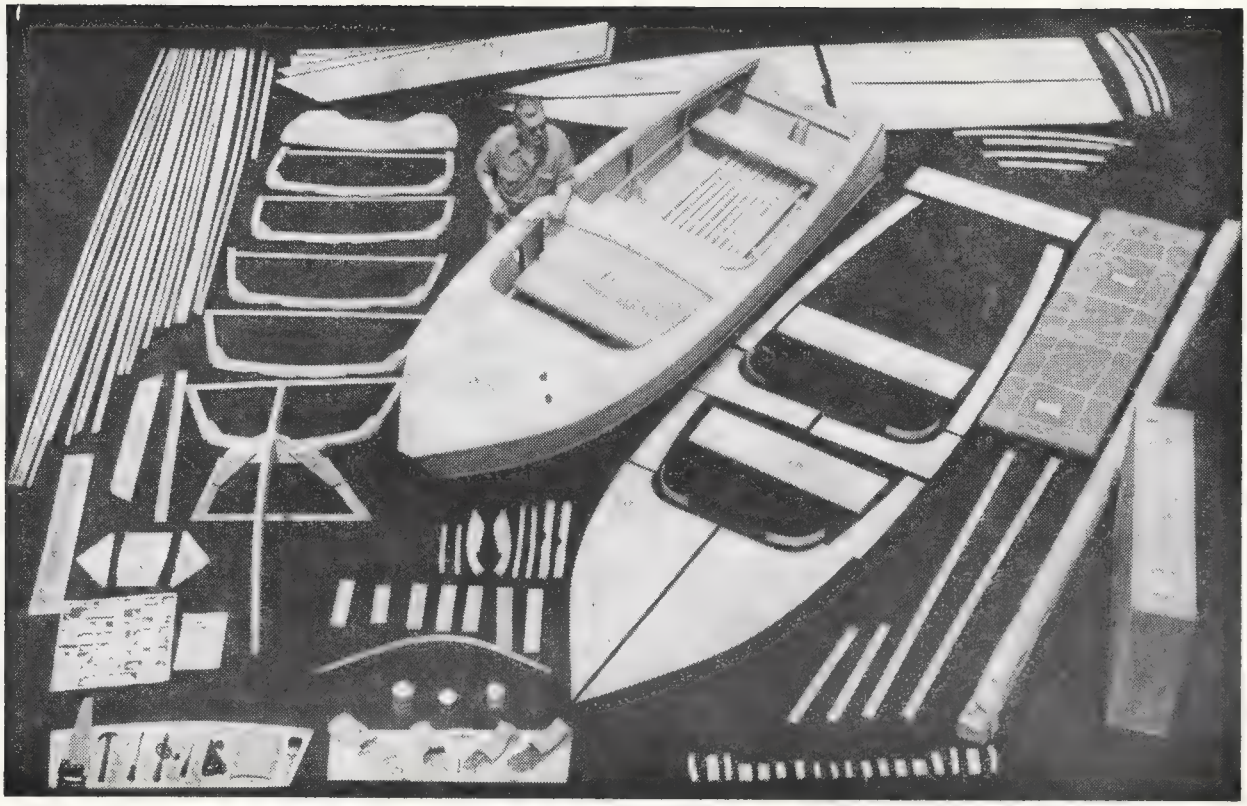
What to Do in an Old Joke

The story of the man who built a boat in his basement, and had to tear down the house to get it out, is one of the oldest anecdotes in the history of amateur boat building. (In situations like this, take the boat out the south basement wall, and use the resulting excavation for a rock garden.) Yet the fact remains that this ancient wheeze is truer today than ever. Ed has more calls to rescue kit boat builders whose ambitions are bigger than their working space than for any other reason.

So first, if you want to build a 12-foot boat, be sure you have 12 feet to assemble it in, plus some working space for yourself around the edges, and an exit big enough to get it through. Ingenuity sometimes can compensate for lack of space. One cramped apartment dweller built a seven-foot pram in his hall closet by standing the boat on end. His only hardship, he reports, was that he had to use a stubby screwdriver because he didn't have enough room for a long one, and he had to swear in a whisper lest he disturb the neighbors. The pram went down the fire escape without a hitch.

The second step is to read the directions, an obvious piece of advice you may be tempted to neglect if you already know something about what you're doing. Because the directions are so easy to follow, if you have a good kit you will frequently find yourself promoting yourself to Step 20, which offers you a challenge you can sink your teeth in, without bothering about the elementary simplicity of Steps 17, 18 and 19. Ed can't explain this urge to get ahead of yourself, but it is a powerful one, and holes drilled where no holes are supposed to exist must be plugged in a boat, no matter what you did with them in the last bookcase you made.

But there are more to the directions than that. They are the distillation of all the arts, sciences and mumbo-jumbo that have made boat-building a thing of mystery bordering on witchcraft through the centuries. When the directions call for Frame 4 to be inserted at Station 4 instead of



A U-Mak-It kit boat and its parts. The three packages at the right are the complete kit.

some more convenient place, it's not because the kit builder is trying to sell more wood. It's because naval architects, studying the stresses and strains of wave action, centrifugal force and motor thrust, have solved for you the complex problem of how to keep your craft from breaking apart the first time it teeter-totters on a wave.

Actually, the directions have been evolving over many years. The first kit boat probably came in knocked-down form as a bundle of bulrushes. The Indian with his pot of pitch, roll of birch bark and bale of willow wands had it, and so did the Yankee traders who obligingly sent along a log with a book of instructions on how to cut it up. But the modern boat-kit can be said to have got its start just 25 years ago, and though the idea was solid, the pioneers like U-Mak-It and Custom Craft did not have it easy. Planks warped or curled, chines swelled and notches shrank. In humid country amateur builders looked at the distorted mess that had once been select, kiln-dried lumber, and shrieked to heaven.

Plywood was the first boon to the kit suppliers. Non-warping and non-shrinking, it provided planks that arrived as precisely shaped as when they left the factory. But unless painted correctly, the bonding agent that held the layers of wood together had a disconcerting habit of dissolving when left in the water too long. It was the war that speeded up the perfection of a marine plywood and the development of boat designs that could take full advantage of it.

By the end of the war the boat-kit suppliers had available a waterproof, non-warping, non-shrinking material that was inexpensive, light and flexible. It could be fitted to any developed surface, meaning that it could be applied flat, or to any part of a cylindrical or cone-shaped surface. Its one limitation, in terms of the fully-rounded, sweeping curves of traditional boat design, was that it could not be fitted to any part of a sphere.

That's when the designers went to work to turn this limitation into an asset. Imagine, if you will, a large, wide sheet of plywood that has been bent lengthwise to form part of the arc of a large, culvert-like cylinder. Now imagine the tremendous force necessary to bend this curved trough in the middle. It won't bend; it will shatter first, but only under pressures far greater than will ever be encountered by a small craft in rough seas.

By applying this feature to the classic hull of the P-T boat, naval architects were able to turn out a craft that could crash through rough seas at 70 mph, even when loaded with torpedoes and anti-aircraft cannons. This same feature, modified in countless ways to the less stringent requirements of pleasure craft, opened a whole new field to the manufacturers of boat kits. No longer were they limited to flat-bottomed prams and skiffs. By carefully working out step-by-step assembly processes, they were able to offer the amateur builder everything from sleek racing-boats to luxury cabin-cruisers.

So once more, as your second step, read the directions. No matter how simple or seemingly unimportant each step might seem, behind each word

lies all the lore of boat-building. What you read in five minutes can represent the work of months on the part of the naval architect, producer, shop superintendent, and a crew of woodworkers.

It is reassuring to know that the more elaborate the boat, the more elaborate the plans. Not only will the individual bits of wood be appropriately stamped for easy identification, but as many as three different kinds of plans will be included so you check and double-check your work as you go along. It's like having three experts at your side all the time.

The Most Usual Trouble

In his role as a distributor of boat kits, Ed Emerson has found that next to inadequate working space and bungled directions, his customers have the most trouble with screws. In keeping with industry-wide policy, the best and strongest kinds of wood are used where needed. (We might warn right here that in a boom of this kind, fly-by-night operators are bound to creep in, so guide yourself accordingly.) White oak, for example, is used in a lot of kits for chines, battens, knees, breasthooks, etc. But regardless of how meritorious white oak is in a boat, it's murder to the man with a screwdriver encountering it for the first time.

One of its favorite tricks, played even on experts, is to appear as soft as pine until a brass screw is within a 16th of an inch of being set. Then it puts up a fight so formidable that inevitably the head of the screw snaps off. This trick, repeated a few times, not only exhausts the supply of screws that came with the kit, but leaves a hull looking as though it had been worked over by a flock of woodpeckers.

All honest kit suppliers will tell you in the directions when you are about to encounter oak, and some have even anticipated your trouble by predrilling pilot holes for screws and bolts. The rule of thumb here is that the more work done for you at the factory, the more you can justifiably expect to pay for the kit, and vice versa.

When encountering white oak, or any other easily-split wood like fir (mahogany excepted), drill a pilot hole suitable to the size of the screw. Then lubricate the screw with a bar of soft laundry soap or even a dab of cup grease. You can then reasonably expect to set the screw tightly without further difficulty. One word of warning: If you use a screwdriver set in a brace, don't underestimate your strength in dealing with brass screws in oak. The increased leverage of the brace is apt to tempt you into setting the screw with a final wrench, and off it snaps. Gently does it.

The introduction of the brace into the conversation brings up the subject of just how many tools you will need in assembling a boat kit. Here again, the more work you expect to do, the more tools you will need. Chris-Craft, in putting out kits for boats up to 31 feet long, has so pre-cut, prefabricated, pre-drilled, and assembled its component parts that it includes only a screwdriver with its largest kit. Here, your job is not so much to build a boat as to assemble one. In general, with an inexpensive kit, you can do an excellent job using only a screwdriver, plane, saw, and a brace equipped with a pilot drill, a 3/16ths-inch drill, and a countersink. And a few sheets of 00 sandpaper if you are fussy, as all boat-builders are.

The fourth most frequent difficulty amateurs have in assembling their kits, according to Ed, is in bending oak chines, battens and sheets of plywood to conform to the design of the boat. A 12-foot strip of plywood destined to become the side of a skiff has been known to put up a battle royal before being bent to a snug fit against the stem. And even when subdued at the stem, it has, in one instance, broken loose at the transom and swept clean a fully loaded dinner table.

Here C-clamps to hold the side plank firmly to the sheer and chine stringers can be mighty handy, and are used by all professional boat builders. Ed has dozens of them, but they are not absolutely necessary. Instead, you can use the old Spanish windlass trick. This consists of wrapping a length of clothesline around side plank and boat frame, and tying it as tightly as possible. Then, by inserting a stick of wood between upper and lower strands of rope, they can be twisted together and drawn up until plank and frame make a tight fit. Another windlass at the stem will lock both ends of the plank in place.

Go Soak Your Stringer

But what about bending the stringers in the first place? Usually these are flexible enough to be bent into place by hand. If it is a chine stringer, for instance, first screw it to the chine notch that's pre-cut in the stem. Then moving toward the transom, screw it to each frame along the way. Sometimes unexpected resistance is encountered. Maybe the stringer is dried out, having rested too long against a radiator while you were doing other work. As you progress toward the stem, watch for this resistance. If you hear alarming creaking noises within the wood, indicating it is about to crack, remove it and soak it in water for a few days.

Since an eight-foot stringer, let alone a 16-footer, is not easy to fit into the family bathtub, you might do as a friend of Ed's did. He plugged up the eaves-trough over the front porch, filled it with water, and let his stringers soak for a few days up there. Another fellow buried his stringers in three inches of well-soaked earth and got satisfactory results, especially with a second batch when a hot sun came out to give them a steam-bath effect.

Almost all kits come supplied with a compound to waterproof the surfaces where wood meets wood, as between side plank and stringer. The trick here is to apply it evenly. Generous gobs of bedding compound produce high spots, and

where there are high spots there are corresponding low spots that permit leaks. Ed gets worried every time he gets a run on extra cans of bedding compound, which frequently happens. The amount that comes with the kit is ample, and when a customer needs more, it means that in most cases he has dealt too generously with his high spots, with a subsequent increase in leaky seams.

Lay Off That Glue

Ed has also encountered several instances in which the home boat builder has sought to improve on the directions by using marine glue instead of bedding compound to add strength to the boat frame. This sort of horrifies him. In the first place the frame is strong enough as designed to meet all safety requirements outside of a heavy, rock-strewn surf, in which case a spot of glue is not the answer anyway. And in the second place, there is little elasticity in glue. A high spot of glue dries to the hardness of rock, and behaves as would a rock in the same place. It acts as a bond at the high spot, but it serves as a separator the rest of the way. When leaks develop, there is no closing them.

The final trap the amateur falls into, Ed finds, is to rush his work once the actual construction is finished. For all its multiple uses, plywood is a poor finisher if rushed. Regular lumber is cut from a log, with a resulting tightness of grain; plywood is shaved or peeled from a revolving log, with a resulting coarseness of grain. Of course, by bonding together three to five layers of cross-grained sheets, the strength is multiplied, but the coarseness of the outer surfaces is not improved a bit.

This situation is easily remedied by using a good plywood sealer applied with a liberal brush. If you don't use the sealer, your boat enamel will vanish into the pores of the wood, leaving a finish not unlike that of a soaked blotter. Nor will additional coats of enamel necessarily remedy the situation. The first coat of enamel, being thick, doesn't penetrate very far. No matter how many more layers of enamel you add, sooner or later plywood exposed to air and water, especially salt water, will begin to open in minute, inch-long cracks. And while these cracks do not indicate a general disintegration of your boat (they stop when they reach the bond that welds one layer of wood to the other) they make a mess of the finish that can't be repaired.

In this respect, we might bring up still another method of finishing your boat, the potential of which is still not fully explored. This is the new glass fabric, as easily cut to shape as the canvas for a canoe, that can be wrapped around your hull and permanently bonded to it with plastic resins and chemical hardeners. Not only does this glass cloth give your boat, as the manufacturers say, "a coat of armor," but it effectively seals any leaky seams while providing a surface that will take a gloss beyond the dreams of the richest yacht owner. Some users have complained that in cutting and fitting the dry cloth, and in sanding down the welded seams to a feather edge, they have gotten "the itch," but this is purely a temporary disturbance, produced by the dust-like particles of broken glass fiber. A good shower solves everything.

But whether you are adding the final coat of paint to glass cloth or to plywood, remember that wet paint is far superior to any electronic dust catcher ever invented. It can collect dust where none has ever been known to exist before. And painting done outside also collects pollen, inch worms, apple blossoms, shad flies, and in one case a whole swarm of flying termites.

Otherwise, the obstacles in the way of your building a boat are not insuperable. "Pleasantly challenging" might be more accurate. And as those who have built their own kit boats say, you don't have to wait until you launch your boat for the fun to begin. It begins when you order your kit.

—By George Scullin

A SHORT SHORT STORY

RIM of the DARK

By JAMES MERRIAM MOORE

SIRENS sounded the White Alert and Tod began to run. Under night and icy autumn rain he ran down the center of a long perspective of black glass. The Avenue that he'd always seen crowded with cars was vacant and the buildings banking it were dark. City light and power had been shut off long ago. The Avenue had become a tremendous unfamiliar road leading deeper and deeper into an unnatural land.

He had so little time. The exit of the deep-shelter he'd left was far behind now. He was nearing the office-building he meant to reach—one of the new office-buildings that had shouldered in recently among old mansions and their gardens. But soon would come the Gray Alert and after that, just before the hostile planes, the Black: laments piped raucously, without majesty, over a city about to be destroyed. Maybe, when he'd done his errand, he wouldn't have time left to get back to the deep-shelter after all.

Running, he clenched in his hand the three office keys he'd begged in the shelter from old Fleming, the family lawyer. Fleming had all at once become unfamiliar too; no longer contained and advisory but suddenly an old man, preoccupied and tremulous with this dislodgment of his ordered life.

Briefly, petulantly, Fleming had tried to hold him back. The office-building would probably go, and all the files with it. Yet Tod remembered how in Hiroshima after the last war,

Illustration by ANTHONY

some of the concrete buildings had remained after the blast.

Getting the keys had taken time that was not to spare. Panting now and slipping in the wet along the black glass of the Avenue that reached endlessly into the dark, he heard the sirens groan, then rise screaming a second time: Gray Alert. The interceptor-fighters must have failed. The enemy bombers were still coming through. Only another half hour, maybe; not more.

Searchlights suddenly thrust up watery, neon-green bands of light, giving horizons to the night, fanning back and forth against swollen underbellies of cloud like vast windshield-wipers. In their profane and futile light Tod saw the building he wanted; ahead, on the right, fronted up to the sidewalk between old mansions more retired among bare trees and lawns.

He was sprinting toward it when the AA guns cut loose—some jittery captain, confused before the first contact of war, firing far too soon. Noise ran along the horizon like people coughing and slamming doors down an echoing corridor, and the bursts winked brief, insignificant holes in massive cloud. Then the lower dark began to fill with the sound of snapped violin strings as the fragments came down.

Tod was on the sidewalk, almost to the shelter of the portico, when he heard above a feathery rustle that turned to a whistle, to a scream, to a trainlike roar. He dove for the portico as the delayed-burst shell finally exploded on the black iced pavement behind him.

He came aware of himself again. It seemed at once—but perhaps there had been an interval, for the firing had silenced and the searchlights were gone. Some cooler head, he thought, must have stopped the useless, premature fusillade.

In the Avenue he saw the crater of the shell, still phosphorously luminous, and he began to crawl toward the portico through chips and fragments of glass and concrete. He got to his feet and leaned a moment against the bronze doors of the office-building. He could feel jagged scars in their metal. But he was all right.

"I'm using up my share of miracles early in this war," he said to hear his voice. Then, using the first of the keys Fleming had given him, he let himself into the dark, echoing lobby that already had begun to smell of damp.

No elevators running of course, but he knew the elaborate stairway leading up from lobby to mezzanine and the larger offices opening on that balcony. He'd generally used the stairs, anxious to get to and through unpleasant business under his own power, alone, without herding among other people. Fleming always told him the wish to walk alone made most of his troubles. Fleming didn't like divorce business in his office.

As he groped his way up these stairs now he remembered how, only a few weeks ago, he'd looked over the bronze banisters and had seen a certain stiff, arrogant bow on a hat moving implacably out of one of the elevators below. That was the last he'd seen of the girl who wouldn't be his wife much longer. Already, probably, after just these few weeks, he wouldn't recognize her hats any more.

He was glad she was safe, though, out in that desert resort. He'd hated her for a while after he found out about her, but he didn't hate her now. All that, suddenly, had faded when he'd suddenly decided, back in the shelter, to get rid of his cross-suit lying in the files of Fleming's office: not on her account but because no child should have to be born in disgrace.

He reached the balcony and began to feel his way down the wall, counting office doors.

And then, under the threshold of the proper door, he saw a thread of light, and he didn't need the second of his three keys at all.

The strange girl was sitting at the secretary's desk, reading a bright-covered novel by one of those flashlight battery lanterns that sit up on a table. A dark coat and scarf were lying damply across a chair, but wind and rain hadn't disturbed the smooth copper of her hair.

She laid down her book, marking the place, and smiled at him. She was so casual he had to grin back. It was like taking up life pleasantly again where he'd left it when it was still pleasant; quite a long time back, that seemed, when he'd never felt alone. And when she waited for him to speak first, as though danger and Alerts and this odd place for him to find her had no weight with them, he didn't want to spoil it.

"Don't say, 'May I help you?' " he told her. "But I'll say something triter. I actually do think I've seen you before somewhere."

She laughed. At first she'd seemed so coolly handsome that it was suddenly good to see her turn just pretty when she laughed. "Maybe I'm the composite type," she suggested; then, quickly serious: "If you've made your way up here for some important reason—I imagine you have—go right ahead. You're probably thinking there isn't too much time."

"You're a comfort," he told her, and went to the bank of file-drawers behind her chair, unlocking, with the third key, the one with his family name on it. She got a cigarette from her purse, but when he noticed and paused to light it she shook her head: "When you're through."

She laid the cigarette in a brass tray on the desk and swung around to watch him leaf through the folders.

It was warmth just to have her there while he searched, as though she'd come along for company—someone he knew well. But he couldn't place her. He remembered girls, if at all, by their mannerisms: small gestures, or, in serenity, ways of holding the chin or letting the hands lie idle. She seemed to have no such external ways; only an inward warmth of companionship. But he had no claim on that.

"Look," he told her, working quickly, still methodically, through the papers in one folder. "I'll find what I'm after in a moment. Then maybe we can try to make it back to a shelter—if you've done what *you* came to do—and if you don't know your way about this town."

"I've done what I came to do," she answered quietly. "Let's leave it at that, shall we?" Then: "Oh, you've found it."

With a breath of relief he rolled the drawer closed. "Yes. Now . . ." he twisted the thin, typed sheets of blue-bound pages in his hand and touched a match to them. When they shriveled toward his hand he dropped the remnants in the ash-tray to burn out. She waited without impatience. The smoldering paper charred her cigarette beside it in the dish. He offered her a fresh cigarette, and she took it from him, still unhurried. A great girl, he thought, for it was her hand, warm and friendly, that steadied his as he held a match for her. Leisurely she drew in the smoke and asked: "But what it said in that paper was true, wasn't it?"

"Yes. But—" urgencies and danger seemed not to matter anymore; she was giving him a light from her cigarette and he answered the question with her eyes looking close into his—"truth can hit the wrong person sometimes."

"I'm so glad you've found that out," she said gently.

THEN the sirens sounded the Black Alert. Contrite, he threw her coat around her and hurried her toward the office door. "We'll make the cellars, anyway. I'm sorry. A girl with your nerve deserves— Bring the lantern thing."

She put her arm under his. "You took your chance too, coming up here to do a decent thing."

The AA guns began again now, distant, frantic.

They got out of the office, down their narrow aisle of light-beam on the broad marble stairway. Her heels clicked companionably beside him. But in the lobby she stopped, her hand checking him gently too, her breath warm by his cheek. "Listen. This isn't going to be cellar-safe stuff like London—or even Hiroshima. Science marches on, and so forth. And I don't like concrete and steel beams. The old dwelling-house next door has a garden. And there's a door into it behind the elevators. Let's go out there, in the open, shall we?"

They quickly made their way over to the elevators.

"If you're right about the kind of bomb this is going to be," he reflected grimly, "I needn't have wasted our time getting rid of that stuff in the file."

She raised the lantern beam to his face briefly. "It's intent that counts, isn't it?"

"Are you old Fleming's clerk?" he asked, and they both laughed.

IN the garden, autumn rain still fell. The basin of the fountain was nearly full as they sat together on its rim, the lantern at their feet. They could see each almost all the time by the frantic flicker of shell-bursts. The concussions sent down sprays of rain from the trees. Whatever men might do to each other, the earth and the leafless, dripping shrubs would be duly wetted, would freeze for a while, and then some day would bloom again. Perhaps she put that thought in his mind. Then, inconsequently, he remembered something.

"You know," he told her, "I knew a man in the last war who believed that no one ever died quite alone: even if he were by himself there always came some sort of companion. Maybe that's what we are doing for each other."

Night was leaving the sky except on the rim of the dark north. A gray, watery dawn paled the flashes of shell-bursts.

"Exactly," she whispered.

He put his hand over hers but his voice he kept light. "I'd like to believe it. But if it were true then you'd be a bit early, wouldn't you? The bombers aren't here yet. You wouldn't be coming yet."

She leaned over and flicked out the lantern while the fingers of her other hand, under his, linked with his. And then she looked him full in the eyes.

"You've made it so easy. Thanks. Now think back a little—to the shell-burst just outside the building as you were coming in. Remember? Good men rate a lot of luck. But not miracles, Tod."

They were standing now, and she gave him her other hand as though they had known each other always.

"So, if you're ready, Tod, we might start along. There's really no point in waiting for the bombers. You understand?"

—By JAMES MERRIAM MOORE

Read All About It...

By John T. Dunlavy
and John J. Ryan

RUBBER

THE TERM "rubber" covers thousands of different compounds, no two alike. Liquid rubber in its natural form is known as latex. It circulates in the veins within the bark of rubber trees and is quite distinct from the sap. While it can be obtained from hundreds of tropical trees and shrubs, almost all natural rubber today comes from a single species, the *Hevea Brasiliensis*. These trees are found in a belt about 15 degrees on each side of the equator. They require a year-round temperature range of from 70 to 90 and about 100 inches of rainfall annually. They grow to a height of over 100 feet with a trunk diameter in excess of 12 feet. There are about 90 such trees to the acre. Yield per tree ranges from two to 30 pounds with five pounds typical. Rubber trees are tapped first when five years old and produce until about 25 years of age. The first artificially propagated rubber trees were grown in Kew Gardens, England, in 1876 from plants smuggled into that country from South America. They were later transplanted in various Far Eastern countries, where today 90% of all natural rubber is produced.

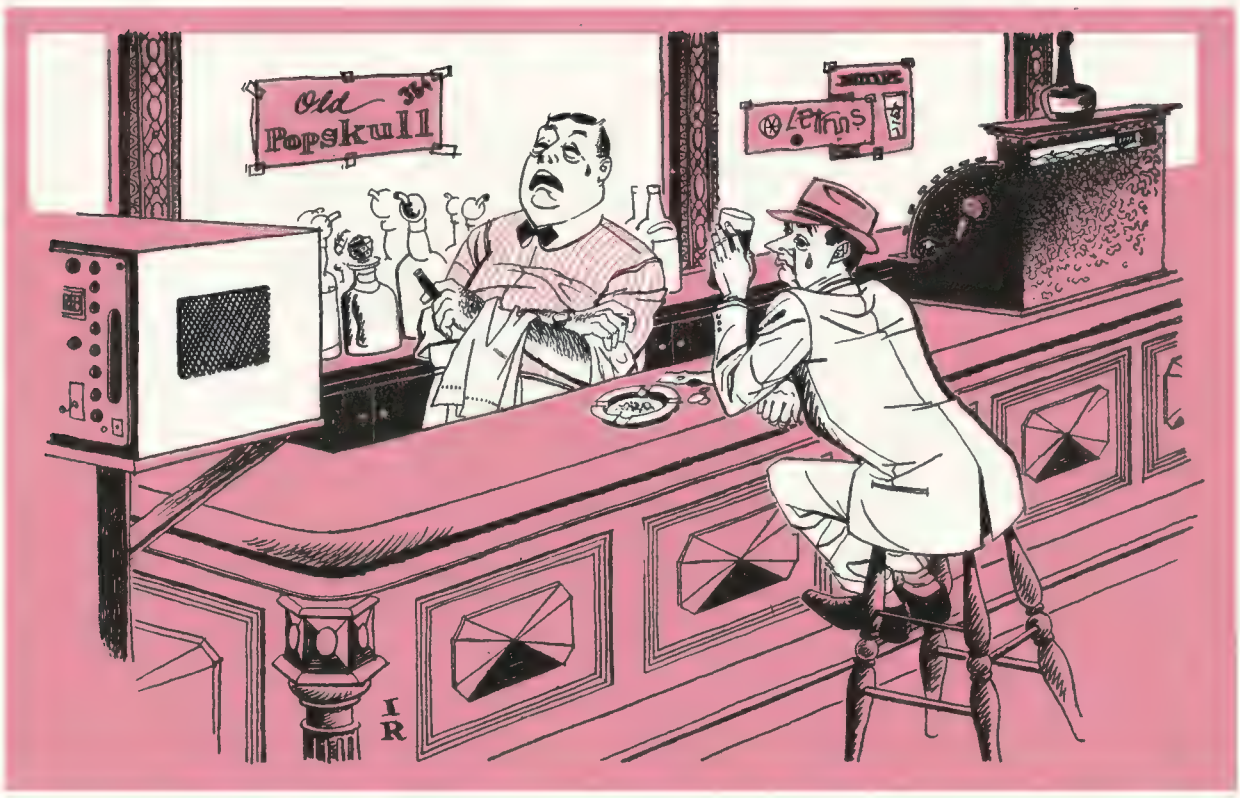
AVERAGE TREAD mileage for auto tires has increased from 5,000 miles in 1908 to more than 30,000 miles today. The 100,000-mile tire, a combination of natural and synthetic rubber and nylon cord, has been built but is presently too high-priced for the regular market. There are about 180 million tires in use today in this country. The tubeless tire is expected to be original equipment on many 1955 cars. Some five million tubeless tires are now in use. They average 32,000 miles of service and, free from friction between tube and tire, run cooler. Front tires wear about twice as long as rear. Tires wear out four times faster on gravel than on concrete or macadam. They last three times longer at 30 mph than at 60 mph.

FOAM RUBBER is 90% air; 10% rubber. It consists of about 250,000 air cells per cubic inch. Foam rubber is lighter and stronger than sponge rubber; has no odor; is impervious to mildew, vermin or moths. Its normal life is estimated at from 10 to 15 years.

IT IS PREDICTED that by 1960, world consumption of rubber will climb from 2.3 million, today's figure, to 3.3 million tons. Of this, natural rubber will account for about 1.7 million tons; the rest will be synthetic. In 1952, America consumed a record amount of rubber—1.2 million tons. Of this 36% was natural, the rest synthetic. Outside the United States natural rubber accounts for two-thirds of the demand; synthetic for one-third. In 1840 the world used only 300 tons of rubber.

RUBBERIZED ASPHALT roads were laid in Akron, Ohio, in the 1920's and have shown little or no deterioration since then. Natural-rubber roads were built in the Netherlands prior to World War II and despite the pounding of war vehicles showed little wear. Test streets of synthetic rubber have been installed in New York City, Chicago, Kansas City, Boston and elsewhere. A rubberized surfacing of pelletized rubber applied as top dressing over asphalt is now used in some playgrounds. Children falling on it have much less chance of serious injury.

THE RUBBER HEEL was invented by Humphrey O'Sullivan of Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1899.... There are some 490 separate species of rubber-producing plants, yet when Thomas A. Edison attempted to cultivate a plant in this country that would economically produce rubber in quantity, he failed.... The term "rubber" was developed by Joseph Priestly in 1770 when he noted that coagulated rubber would erase pencil marks on paper.... The first servicable raincoat was invented in England by Charles Macintosh in 1823.... One curious method of collecting rubber was once practiced in the Congo: liquid latex, as it came from the trees, was smeared over the shaved heads of the native gatherers, where it coagulated and was then peeled off in thin layers and packed.... Para rubber from Brazil is the finest grade of natural rubber.... Tractors on farms use tires filled with water rather than air as the weight of the liquid adds considerably to the tractor's pulling power.



Now it's (Sob) MALE Soap Opera

BY DICK REDDY

On guard, boys! Today the frau can take a daily course in what makes the old man tick.

I WAS ONLY moderately surprised to see, in a recent magazine feature about TV soap opera, that there is now a show built around a male character, rather than a widow or a woman senator. This show, which we might call a shaving soap opera, may well mark the beginning of a trend full of dark significance for the American male.

The consumer-tested formula is to take a woman (in the no-longer-in-her-first-youth age group) and equip her with a sort of built-in set of cataclysms which provide her with a steady round of disease, domestic strife, insanity, financial worries, sudden death and other little entertainments. The exception, a damp-eyed daily called *The Secret Storm,* takes a widower (let's not get too far off formula) and clobbers him.

His wife is killed while driving to a party to hear his long-overdue promotion announced. His three motherless children are being taken care of by his sister-in-law who, just for kicks, is bitter against him because he once jilted her. He has (not unreasonably, I think) taken to drink. Before breakfast, at that. The sister-in-law is trying to make the children believe that he is going mad. Unfortunately, I lost the thread of the thing at this point since Sam, the barkeep at the place where I do my research, prefers *Stella Dallas.*

So long as the network sudswriters confined their bawl-point pens to the portrayal of women and their lugubrious doings, we males were reasonably secure. What men there are in the conventional show can best be compared to the tonsils or the appendix. Of no recognizable function, they serve chiefly as excuses for emergency operations and an occasional fatality. The children of the multitude of soap-opera widows seem to be the result of parthenogenesis or fission, or something like that. Their late fathers, if they ever had any, are never mentioned. In fact, what men there are in the scripts are mostly grave, kindly psychiatrists, or

pitiful victims of amnesia who are shortly to be unveiled after a bout of plastic surgery.

The whole picture changes ominously when the spotlight is deliberately concentrated on the male psyche. A daily course in masculine behaviorism may prove to be the beginning of the end for what peace of mind still remains to the American husband.

Watching her daily dose of *Mervin Sweet, Male Midwife* the homemaker will begin to notice little actions of Mervin's that seem to tip her off to some of Hubby's doings. She realizes, for instance, that Mervin forgot his boutonniere in yesterday's episode because he was bemused by the charms of that new receptionist at the asylum. Then, this morning, Hubby forgets to put his teeth in before coming downstairs and the fathead is in the fire.

Let's take a look at a typical scene in a home where the wife has become addicted to male soap opera. John and Madge are at breakfast. Madge looks up and, with a brave note of forced gaiety in her voice, says:

"You were late last night, John." (She knows why men get home late from the office. That's how it began between Roger and Elaine in *Man Alone.*)

"Mmm." (That's exactly what Roger said. The very word!)

"Busy at the office, John?" (Be casual Madge —oh, be casual!)

"Yeah, kinda." (Evasion. Just like Claude in *Jonathan's Journey.*) Madge already sees the children grown up into delinquents, wretched victims of a broken home.

Of course John wasn't at the office at all, the gay dog. He stopped for a quick one with a couple of the boys from the shipping room. If Madge sniffs this out, though, he's really up the creek. All the varnish is off the front of the TV set from the number of secret drinkers (men who drink without their wives) who blear through the screen at her every day. This is worse than the Other Woman, where about all she can do is call a lawyer. If she thinks John has started nibbling at the Old Popskull, she's liable to start slipping things in his coffee and having strange clergymen call him up in the middle of the night.

Any way you look at it, Madge's course in TV behavior in the American male is going to be pretty rough on John. Doing her little household tasks to the accompaniment of stifled sobs and ambulance sirens, she may soon come to look upon masculine normalcy as a pretty sometime thing. She learns to spot the tiny, apparently meaningless clues that forecast the arrival of the sheriff, the surgeon, the psychoanalyst or the undertaker. Soon she realizes that it's only a toss-up as to which will hit John first—infidelity, alcoholism, latent criminality, a blighted career or galloping insanity.

She finds herself giving a little start of surprise when John steps out for a paper and comes back without amnesia. Finally, unhinged by Madge's trained scrutiny of his ego, John has an excellent chance of turning blue around the edges and developing infidelity, alcoholism, latent criminality, a blighted career and galloping insanity—with or without amnesia.

Grim as the picture is, there are, nevertheless, several methods by which the old man may be able to defend himself, perhaps even take the offensive.

The simplest and most direct method, of course, is to kick in the front of the TV set and let it go at that. This is manly and straightforward, but it may cause some inconvenience for men who like to watch the fights.

A better system is to use what might be called the *Counter-Research Approach.* This consists in first discovering just what the better half's favorite show is and at what hour it's on the air. The husband then arranges the time of his office coffee break so that he can get out and see the show. By following it closely he can get an idea of what's being pumped under the Little Woman's curlers.

Pierre has regained what passes for consciousness.

If he's reasonably quick on his feet he can occasionally turn this information to his own advantage.

The beginner should take it easy at first. For example, let's say that the husband (whom we shall call *Charlie*) has hopes of slipping out to see a movie at a friend's house on Friday night and wants to build up a little backlog of sweetness and light around the homestead before breaking the news that he's going out. Gerty's favorite anaesthetic is called *Just Plain Pierre* and Charlie starts studying it about a week ahead.

Friday's episode isn't much help. Pierre is lying at death's door (he lies there so much on this show that he has "EMOCLEW" written across his shoulder blades) as a result of an attack by a mysterious stranger who has come to town like a voice from the past. By Tuesday, though, Pierre has regained what passes for consciousness with him. He recognizes his wife, Laurel, and, as the episode ends, his fever-dry lips part and he murmurs, "It's you, isn't it? It was always you."

Charlie thinks this line is pretty hot stuff, but instead of going back to the office he stays for about a pint more inspiration. He finally heads home, fumbles his way in, peeks around the kitchen door and comes to a roguish focus on the ball and chain.

"It's you, isn't it? It was always you, you, *you*, you," he murmurs.

Gerty either slips hastily into the pantry and locks the door, or simply raises an inquiring eyebrow and says, "You were expecting maybe Lilyan Tashman?" In either case, Charlie has tipped his mitt to no purpose and Gerty writes the number of a good sanitarium on the wall beside the telephone table.

If Charlie is smart he'll wait until Pierre gives him a real tip. This may take a bit longer, but it's bound to happen sooner or later. On Thursday it comes, right after the third commercial. Pierre and Laurel have just finished dinner. It is fashionably after eight and they are peering at each other through the intimate candlelight when two men are shown in. They have come to ask Pierre to run for governor. This is it, Charlie, you old Counter-Researcher, you!

Friday night Charlie and Gerty are just finishing dinner. It is fashionably after six and Charlie has just started a toothpick when two men arrive. They have been delegated to ask Charlie to help out at a meeting of the neighborhood garbage-disposal committee. Naturally, they are two of his more presentable friends, but Gerty doesn't know this. Just so Pierre's spadework won't be wasted, Charlie laughs lightly as he puts on his cap and says, "I thought for a minute they were going to ask me to run for governor, Gert." Gerty, already softened up by Pierre, takes it well and Charlie departs for the drawn shades and the 16-millimeter fun. He's not only out tonight—he may even be able to turn this into a regular weekly event.

A word of warning. Go easy on using amnesia. It's as common as the head cold on TV soap opera, but it should be saved for only the most extreme crises in real life. The tragic case of Herbert Janowski of Englewood, New Jersey, is a timely example.

Herbert, suddenly faced with having to explain an unscheduled weekend in Atlantic City, allowed himself to be found, dazed, on his front porch, unable to explain who he was or how he had gotten there.

Instead of bringing him in and nursing him back to health in the best soap-opera tradition, his wife, Gladys, agreed at once that she didn't know *him*, either. She is sticking to her story and, at last report, Herbert was living at the YMCA, wishing that he had taken another week in Atlantic City.

—By Dick Reddy

Herbert allowed himself to be found, dazed, on his front porch, unable to explain it.

man around the house

By JOHN SHARNIK

QUIET, PLEASE

Can't hear yourself think at your place? Easily fixed. Block off the sound waves or trap them.

IF YOU'RE one of those parents who think kids make more noise around the house than they used to, you've got it backwards. Take it from acoustical engineers, who've got their hands full of the problem these days, it's today's house that makes more noise around the kids.

Consider a recent intriguing episode at my own establishment:

The five-year-old commando who bivouacs at our place suddenly and mysteriously acquired the habit of stirring into furious activity at odd hours of the night—sometimes reporting to the kitchen for breakfast at midnight or tearing out to round up his neighborhood battalion at dawn.

It took some clever nocturnal sleuthing to track down the cause: a new tile job in an adjoining small bathroom. The walls echoed so thunderously that the flush of the toilet or the gulp of the basin drain rang through the boy's bedroom like a firehouse alarm.

The remedy? A new clothes closet that I'd been planning to install in the boy's room was placed along the bathroom wall, instead of the opposite wall where I'd been figuring to put it. The bathroom ceiling, which I'd been planning to patch and repaint, acquired a good-looking new sound absorbent surface of perforated acoustical tile.

Case of the nocturnal rambler closed.

"Bathroom echoes," the acoustical experts tell me, are just one of the many common noise hazards of today's typical small house. Engineer Paul Washburn explains the situation this way:

The boxy rooms and overstuffed furnishings of the old-fashioned home tended to hedge in sounds and swallow them up. Today's house, with its numerous electrical appliances and mechanical contrivances, sets up more of a racket in the first place. Furthermore, its emphasis on clear expanses and simplified construction, on sparse furnishings and uncluttered surfaces, makes it a sounding board for distracting noises.

If, for example, you find it difficult to concentrate on a guest's conversation because you keep getting cross-currents from the conversation of other guests across the living room; if the ripe tones of your new hi-fi speaker turn into a snarl of bedlam whenever kids enter the room; if you can't throw even a respectable party without rousing the tots from their quarters—if any of these conditions describe your household, then you've got decibel troubles.

To correct the condition may require the shift of a doorway or the construction of a partition, or the application of one of the many effective and good-looking forms of acoustical wall and ceiling materials now available. Some forms, as I'll explain in a moment, can be bought at lumberyards for do-it-yourself installation; others are handled only by acoustical contractors in your area, who'll install them for you.

"There are two different kinds of acoustical problems in the home," expert Washburn explains, "and they have to be dealt with in two different ways."

One problem is ***sound transmission***—the passage of noise from one room to another. The second is ***sound reverberation***—excessive loudness of sound within a room, caused by the bouncing around of sound waves off walls, floors and ceilings.

In general, engineers explain, the only real remedy for **sound transmission** is to create a thick, solid "sound barrier"—a plaster wall is as good as any. A strategically placed closet, as in my own case, will reinforce or take the place of a wall as a means of blocking sound.

In some cases, you may not be able to shut off the flow of noise altogether, but you may be able to lessen it by forcing the sound waves to travel greater distances or to turn corners before they reach an opening. In the course of the trip, like a distance runner, they lose some of their force.

One basic illustration of this technique is an alteration made by a householder I know. By moving a doorway from his living room to his dining area (as shown in sketch on next page), he was able to counteract the effects of a hall that had acted as a sound tunnel, channeling party noises back from the living room to the children's rooms at the rear of the house.

The solution for the second type of problem, **sound reverberation,** is, the experts agree, to create a "sound trap"—a soft, porous expanse to soak up noises and keep them from getting scrambled-up with each other. This is what you need, for in-

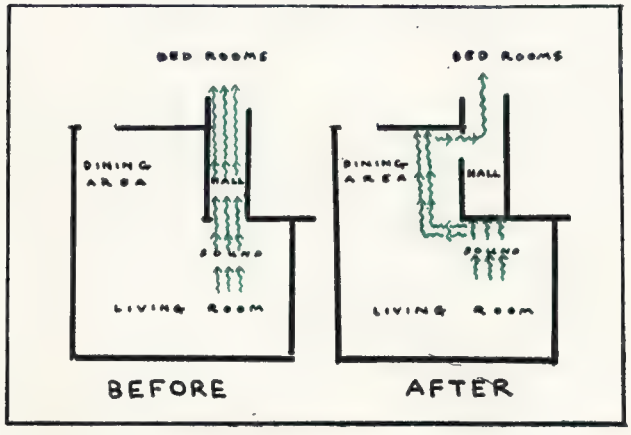
stance, to keep conversations from getting confused or to prevent the kids' hoarse whispers in the television room from drowning out your ball game.

Here's where the acoustical materials come into the picture. For ceilings, there are foot-square tiles, with perforated, fissured or grooved surfaces, which can be applied by cementing directly to an existing plaster or plasterboard surface (if it's in good shape) or by nailing or screwing to furring strips (if the ceiling is badly cracked or uneven). Tiles made of wood fiber will cost you somewhere between 15 and 25 cents per square foot at your lumberyard. The thicker the tile, the more sound-absorbent—and the more expensive. Tiles made of rock wool or fiberglas are usually installed by a professional, and, apart from the labor, will probably cost two to two-and-a-half times as much as the wood-fiber variety. These more expensive kinds are somewhat more sound-absorbent and, especially, more moisture-resistant. They're recommended for bathrooms and for some kitchens.

For walls *or* ceilings, you can also have professionally installed acoustical panels, ranging in size up to 4′ by 8′. These generally consist of a perforated asbestos sheet backed by a blanket of rock wool or fiberglas. (Prices are quoted only by the specific job.)

Here, culled from a variety of professional sources, are a number of pointers about the use of these acoustical materials and about household noise problems in general:

(1) Because wood fiber tiles are both attractive and easy for the amateur to install—no power tools needed; cut edge and corner pieces with a linoleum knife—they may be the answer to a ceiling repair project in a room where the noise problem is only incidental. If your kitchen ceiling, for instance, is too far gone for plaster-patching, an acoustical tile job will provide a neat new surface. At the same time, it'll soak up the noise of kitchen appliances, so you'll find that you're able to conduct a civil-toned conversation with your wife about what's for dinner even though she's got the electric mixer going full blast.



(2) Use acoustical tiles in an attic-finishing project and you'll not only have a quieter upstairs but a house that's warmer in winter, cooler in summer. All acoustical materials—especially rock wool and fiberglas—have heat- and cold-insulating qualities as well as their noise-insulation properties.

(3) Certain sound transmission problems can be reduced somewhat at their source by simple "insulation" devices. Put thick rubber bases under piano legs to reduce transmission along the floor. If you buy an air conditioner, electric fan, dishwasher or other electrical appliance, get one with a rubber-mounted motor. If you have a hot-air furnace that sends shudders up through the ducts every time it turns on, you probably need a canvas boot inserted at the junction of the main duct and the furnace.

(4) Noise from the yard or the street is another sound-transmission problem. Acoustical material mounted around a window frame won't help in the least, as acoustical engineers have to keep explaining to clients. The only solution, one expert recently told a man whose house bordered on a new superhighway, is to "shut the damn windows or sell."

(5) Contrary to another common misconception, perforated hardboard—although it resembles acoustical paneling—is not a sound-proofing material. It's the porous innards of acoustical materials that "trap" the sound waves; the perforations merely let the noise into the trap. One fellow with an experimental bent, however, claims to be getting good results out of a home-made acoustical panel which he created out of a sheet of perforated hardboard by nailing it to furring strips between which he had laid rolls of rock wool insulating material.

(6) You may be able to improve the performance of a hi-fi set by mounting an acoustical panel, or an area of acoustical tile, directly across the room from the speaker.

(7) Should you put acoustical material on your walls or on your ceiling? The sound experts claim it usually makes little difference. The reason you see more acoustical ceilings than acoustical walls is simply that a ceiling is usually the biggest uninterrupted surface in a room, so you can use it to build a bigger and better sound trap.

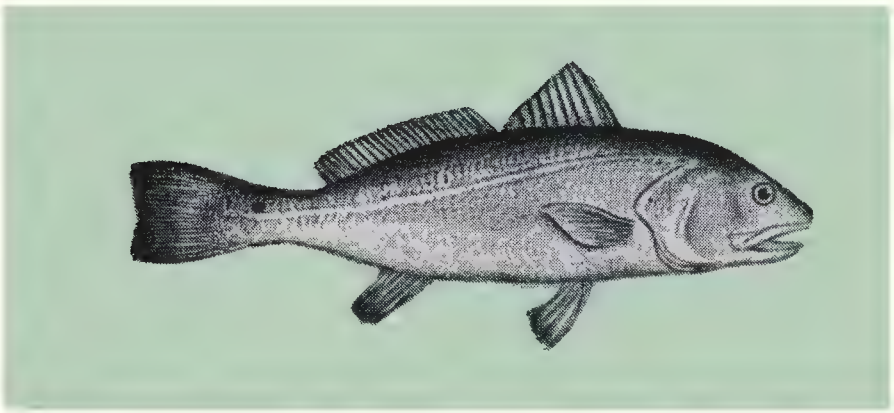
(8) If your kids persist in making liars out of the scientists of sound, and a sound barrier or sound trap fails to tone down the noisy house around them to a livable volume, consider the sage example of one acoustical engineer:

"When all else fails, I send 'em to the movies."

—By John Sharnik

All prices mentioned in the foregoing article are approximate, since they vary from region to region and even dealer to dealer.—Ed.

Angler's Almanac



By Robert C. McCormick

THIS MONTH'S STAR:

Channel Bass—*Also called Red Drum, Drumfish, Redfish (in Florida), Red Horse (off Texas-Mexico), Rat Bass and Banded Drum.*

MARKINGS: Coppery red back and sides, blending into white belly. Large, distinctive black ball-like dot marks base of tail just above lateral line. Average size: 10-30 pounds in Atlantic surf; 5-20 pounds in rivers, bays, inlets and bayous. Record: 83 pounds off Cape Charles, Virginia, August 5, 1949.

HABITAT: What striped bass is to the northern salt-water angler, channel bass is in south; range extends from south Jersey coast, down around Florida Peninsula, along Gulf Coast to Texas, Mexico and even Panama. Biggest fish (40-50 pounds) are found in surf off beaches of Virginia and the Carolinas, but what Gulf Coast Redfish lack in size, they make up in numbers and catchability.

Little is known about spawning habits. Fish, members of the croaker family, school up to feed slowly along bottom off sandy shores on incoming tide, may often be spotted by surfcasters along inshore side of sandbars thanks to copper-colored luster they impart to water. Favored foods: crabs, bunkers, mullet, menhaden, plus whatever else can be found in shallows. Though bigger sizes are not highly regarded as a food fish, the 5- to 8-pound "puppy drum" are eagerly sought by Southern gourmets.

HOW TO CATCH: Though most sporting when taken from the surf, channel bass provide late fall and winter sport for Southern saltwater specialist rivaling that of striped bass in Northern summertime. For sheer fun, try fishing 'em from the surf as you would the stripers (see August BLUEBOOK) with one exception: since channel bass prefer sandy bottoms, you can forget rocky coastline for these. Best bet in the surf itself, though, is to still-fish with usual fish-finder rig, using mullet, menhaden, squid or whole or quartered shredder crabs for bait. Either conventional surf tackle or heavy spinning gear will do, but be wary when setting hook; redfish strike slowly, must be given time to make a short, bait-mouthing run before you strike.

They're also caught by trolling artificial lures from boats small enough to work just outside the breakers, in and around sloughs and lagoons formed when incoming tide rushes in behind exposed sandbars. Still-fishing from slowly drifting boats in same general areas is good, too, but you'll have to be cautious in your stalking habits no matter what system you use; like bonefish, channel bass spook easily and a carelessly dropped oar may send a whole school scampering for cover. Another good trolling spot is across the mouth of sea-running rivers, but when it storms, best go home; fish head for deep holes at first sign of bad weather, return only after storm ends. Best artificials: large flies, jigs, plugs and spoons, plus metal squids, same as for stripers.

Since most big channel bass are caught strictly for sport and released on landing, lightweight tackle fanatics have a field day whenever schools are sighted. Heavy-duty fly rods or medium-weight freshwater spinning tackle are enough to handle fish, especially if equipped with 200 yards of strong line (10-pound test) once you get the hang of it. Like as not, channel bass will permit you to lead him along quietly enough until he spots you, your boat or the shore. When that happens, hang on; he's off to the races, may be counted upon to strip 100 yards of line quicker than you can pronounce his scientific name: *Sciaenops ocellata.*

November Hotspots

Northeast: Informed New Yorkers who find their freshwater angling almost within the shadow of the skyscrapers can't wait for November each year; annually, it gives them their best black-bassing of the season. Place to go now is any of Manhattan's water-supply reservoirs in either Westchester or Putnam Counties, which seemed so void of fish throughout hot summer months; the big ones (both largemouth and small) are in there, may be taken now on large minnows (big bait for big fish) during daytime, plug-casting or bass bugging at eventide. Best bets: Kensico-Rye, Muscoot, Titicus, Cross River and the Muscoot end of Croton Reservoir—all within a half-hour's drive of the Bronx city line. You'll need a special watershed permit (issued by NYC Dept. of Water Supply, Gas & Electricity) to fish these large, semi-private reservoirs, but end-of-season angling in colder weather will be worth it.

Elsewhere in Northeast, season's still open on bass in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Vermont and Rhode Island—and all the better-known fishing holes should continue producing right up to midnight of the final day. For other gamefish, try such habitual late-fall fighters as the pickerel in practically any good pickerel pond in north-central Pennsylvania or the Finger Lakes Region of New York; muskellunge in New York's Chautauqua Lake and the St. Lawrence River; northern pike in the same state's Saratoga Lake and Sacandaga Reservoirs, and walleyes on the Vermont side of Lake Champlain, especially around Grand Isle and S. Hero. *And here's a tip:* Divers seeking lost outboard motor off Sunken Island in New York's Canaderaga Lake report walking through schools of jumbo walleyes.

For salt-water specialist: Though channel bass travels as far north as South Jersey in summertime, best bet now is to go after migrating fish in sandy surf from Lewes, Delaware, down along Maryland's Eastern Shore to Cape Charles, plus the Virginia side of Chesapeake Bay. Striped-bassmen farther north also get their final fling of the season now as fish head for Chesapeake to wait out the winter.

South: Best surf fishing for biggest channel bass in USA lies between Carrituck and Cape Fear on North Carolina's beaches—and the time is now. (For local hotspots: See October BLUEBOOK). For angler who likes to get off beaten path, seek out new, highly productive but less publicized waters on his own, place this month is around the scores of islands off the South Carolina-Georgia-North Florida mainland.

Late fall's the best time, too, to go after an abundance of 3-10 pounders, many of them in the "puppy drum" or "good eating" class along North Florida's East Coast, plus entire Gulf of Mexico from Key West to Brownsville, Texas. Good place to try now is waters surrounding Florida's fantastic Ten Thousand Islands in Gulf just off town of Everglades; here, exponents of lightweight tackle always turn up their greatest thrills—not only on channel bass, but snook, tarpon, spotted weakfish (sea trout) and ladyfish as well. You'll need a competent guide to fish these waters. Channel bassing's excellent now, too, in Texas, around Port Aransas and Galveston.

By all means, though, don't miss the late fall runs of speckled sea trout (weakfish) all along the Gulf Coast from Florida to Padre Island. Fish have been in deeper waters during summer months, begin moving into shoreline coves, bays, inlets, bayous and even rivers by the thousands to feed. Best bet now is in the Mississippi River Delta Country below New Orleans; Alabama's Fort Morgan peninsula area; state of Mississippi's Pascagoula, Tchoutacabouffa, Biloxi or Jordan Rivers, plus Davis, Herring, Fort, Arcadian and Rotten Bayous. Matter of fact, speckled trout is so abundant all along Gulf Coast now that Baldwin County, Alabama, stages its annual Speckled Trout Derby during Thanksgiving Week. Presence of fish in sea-running rivers also gives freshwater angler an added incentive to head for coastline come November; otherwise you'll be limited to good, but not spectacular freshwater sport in any of the more-popular southern lakes and streams nearer home. Best now: any of Alabama's four TVA Dams, Mississippi's Eagle Lake, any bass lake in Florida.

Midwest: Midwestern anglers seeking trophies for mounting on den walls do no better anytime than in late November—and the closer you fish to freeze-up time on the big lakes the better. You'd best forget about bait-casting methods now and concentrate on trolling king-sized lures (best: shiny spoons) in 6-12 feet of water in neighborhood of sunken reefs, small islands or around end of long points.

Best bet for anyone who can spend the time obviously is any of the known, back-country musky-pike waters of Wisconsin (musky season ends here Nov. 1), Minnesota or Michigan. You'll be able to fish muskies through November in latter two states, but in Wisconsin you'll have to concentrate on truly big pike; these, of course, give you better fight than smaller muskies anytime. Even stay-at-homes can still get good sport (plus big fish) if they'll hit known musky-pike waters near metropolitan centers; Chicagoans, for example, shouldn't miss any of these three Fox Chain of Lakes: Grass, Nippersink and Fox. Other good ones: any of the Steuben County lakes north of Fort Wayne, Indiana; the Bass Islands in Lake Erie off Sandusky, Ohio; Big Stone Lake on the Minnesota-South Dakota border; plus, by all means, Lake St. Claire just a few minutes from downtown Detroit.

And, if you can possibly make it, don't miss Michigan's fall run of rainbow trout (steelhead locally) up from the Great Lakes. Fish run big (5-10 pounds), hit anything from night crawlers to dry flies, fight fiercely once hooked, especially on November spawning runs. State's special fall trout season permits catching fish on some streams until December, so better check locally for latest information; most popular spots for biggest fish is around the mouth of the Sturgeon, Betsy and Big Manistee River (below Tippy Dam) on the state's lower peninsula; Rock, Mosquito and Miner Rivers on the upper. And don't forget to watch your weather; dry fall keeps fish in lakes longer whereas a spell of rainy weather usually starts 'em moving upstream fast. Trick is to be there when fish are.

Far West: Though trout season's practically over in most parts of Rocky Mountains in November, you can still get a lot of excellent angling in specialized areas if you know where to look. In Montana, for example, your best bet now is to fish either the lower Madison River from Hebgen Dam on downstream—or any of the four major streams flowing into Hebgen Lake the dam creates. Late fall's fishing's always good on the Madison (one of nation's ten best trout waters), and, during November, bigger browns and rainbows leave Hebgen Lake for runs up its feeder-streams. Browns, on spawning runs, are likely to be in poor shape but the rainbows are usually at their best; season's open here till November 15. Trout season's open, too, on lakes in the Idaho panhandle—including Upper Priest, Priest, Court d'Alene and the famed Pend Oreille (see October BLUEBOOK). Rainbow, brook, cutthroat and Kamloops are the fare.

Warm water anglers after bass, both largemouth and small, walleyes, catfish and panfish begin to come into their own in the Far West during November. In most waters, especially in overheated Southwest, fish have been deep in lakes during summertime, begin moving into shoreline coves now to feed. Bassmen can do no better now than in huge and sprawling Lake Mead in Colorado River near Boulder Dam, almost-as-big Elephant Butte Reservoir in the Rio Grande south of Albuquerque, N.M., and in 46-mile-long Lake Havasu formed by Parker Dam in the Colorado between California and Arizona.

Late fall also marks beginning of annual striped bass runs up fresh-water rivers flowing into California's San Pablo and San Francisco Bays; fishermen naturally follow, taking fish in large numbers and of huge size from now until colder waters slow active feeding. Best bets now are the Napa River, the main Sacramento River and its various tributaries and sloughs, plus the San Joaquin near Stockton. Any of a score of fishing camps in the San Francisco area will put you in touch with the best of this migratory kind of sport.

A COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

BY LINDSAY HARDY

the Faceless Ones

the Faceless Ones

BY LINDSAY HARDY

Tough, smart Gregory Keen of British Intelligence had his full share of guts. And he needed it now. His orders: get back at any cost those enormously explosive plans before the Soviets got them.

THEY HAD FLOWN Gregory Keen from London to Berlin late that day because his four languages included German and Russian, and because the situation called for a man of action who was also a man of sensibility and discernment. Now he sat alone against a wall of the cellar called the Café Lorraine in Lichtenstrasse, with the collar of his crumpled trench-coat turned up and a glass of the almost undrinkable Czech rye on the table in front of him. He had gone down some steps from the rubble and the cold outside and into this room filled with knowing eyes that stared and flicked away and then turned carefully to stare again through the smoke under the low ceiling.

The room was nearly full. A bar and a long mirror lined the wall facing the head of the steps and there were tables set about, some with checked cloths on them, some bare. A man at a scarred piano in one corner accompanied another on the violin, and a girl in a tight sweater postured and swayed as she huskily sang sad songs about the futility of love. Other girls sat at the bar with men in the several uniforms of the Occupation. Among them, watching the steps in the bar mirror, was a short thick-set man in an old green duffel coat with its hood thrown back over his shoulders.

There was a low mutter of conversation; an aproned waiter moved about with a napkin over one arm and a tray.

It was more than an hour since, according to the instructions from Mayerling, Gregory Keen had given the waiter his name. He glanced down at his watch and across the room to the mirror. Catching the reflected eye of the man in the duffel coat, he shrugged imperceptibly. Keen could ignore the girls and the men in uniform but there were the others.

There were some chords for an introduction that he recognized from an air that was in vogue at the moment, and the girl in the tight sweater leaned back against the piano, her breasts outthrust. The violinist came to wander about between the tables. A thin gaunt man nearby ground out his cigarette and began to cough in a racking spasm, clutching at his chest and shaking his head when the violinist bent over to say something as he played. A man wearing a beret went up the steps after a blonde girl with a smudge on her bare ankle.

The popular song came to an end. The violinist put resin on his bow and tucked his silk handkerchief under his chin. The coughing man recovered his composure, and across the room a girl shouted and hammered with her fist on the bar.

He finished his Czech whiskey and the waiter approached with his tray, standing for a moment beside the table and interrupting Keen's view of the cellar steps to point at the empty glass. Keen shook his head, no. When the waiter moved away, Keen saw a tall man in a raincoat that hung nearly to the floor, standing inside the curtains at the head of the steps. Mayerling had said the half hour before 10 o'clock; it was already 12 minutes to 11.

Keen watched the man in the long raincoat as he came down and found himself a table. The man had hollow cheeks and straight hair brushed

sharply back from a peak on the forehead, one deep-set eye, and a black patch covering the socket of the other. Keen waited for the one eye to turn in his direction, but the man stayed half in profile, staring at the girl by the piano.

The waiter went to his table, standing with his back to Keen. The man in the raincoat said something and the waiter, bending, made a slight movement as though to turn. The man in the raincoat restrained him, putting a hand out swiftly to the waiter's elbow. Something more was said rapidly and the waiter nodded and moved away.

After a while Keen took his glass and went to stand idly between one of the girls at the bar and the man in the green duffel coat. He ordered whiskey again and when the bartender had poured for him and gone to the other end of his bar, Keen stared down at his glass and said softly: "How much longer, Coutts?"

The man in the duffel coat said to the mirror in a faintly Cockney accent: "You're all right, I've got you well covered."

"The fellow in the long ulster. What do you think?"

"Don't know."

"Catch the scene with the waiter?"

"His one eye's on us both now."

"Keep yours down."

Keen turned away from the bar and looked steadily about the room, one elbow back, glass in hand, disinterested, and when he was facing the man with the patch on his eye he raised the glass and drank down some of the whiskey.

He heard Coutts say behind him, "Not a flicker," and then, "Better get away from the bar, it's not him we're after."

Keen exchanged one or two remarks with the girl on his other side and went back to his table. The blue haze of smoke thickened and swirled and hung close under the ceiling in horizontal layers. Another 10 minutes crawled by while he thought that somewhere in Berlin was the man he had been sent to meet; and sometime that man would come to the Café Lorraine. He could be there already. It could be the fellow with the violin, the gaunt man who had coughed, the fat man with the *Fraulein,* or any one of a dozen others. All Keen knew about him was that he would come from Mayerling, and Mayerling was in possession of the Foreman Journals. . . .

Three weeks had gone by since the plane crashed at Greiskirchen near the Austrian border, and Admiral Richard Foreman of the U. S. Navy had died in the wreck. But it was not much more than two days since the photostat extracts of the journals had been delivered to the Thames Embankment in London, to the organization that went by the code name of Crossbow.

It was the photostats that had brought Amery from Berlin, the American Christopher Miles from Regensburg in West Germany, Colonel Hone across the Atlantic from Washington, and Gregory Keen to the Embankment less than 24 hours before. They had gathered the previous night to hear what Christopher Miles could tell them about the Foreman journals, and for Keen, that was when the affair had begun.

Keen remembered Miles as the American had told his tale, tall, good-looking, with dark crew-cut hair and smooth brown skin. Miles had been in Vienna, he said, when Admiral Foreman's plane crashed at Greiskirchen. Foreman, the Naval Attaché at a certain embassy, had been carrying classified material, and Miles left Vienna for the wreck immediately.

He had taken the Enns Bridge out of the Soviet Zone and no attempt had been made to hold him and his man up, but when they arrived at what was left of the plane in the pine forest, Foreman's dispatch case was already gone. They went to work and after a time they identified a man in Vienna who had been at the scene of the crash before them. But when they moved in they were half an hour late. He was dead, killed presumably for Foreman's papers.

Although Miles didn't know then who he was after, the trail led into West Germany, to a house in a dead-end alley in Regensburg. There they ran into trouble. The man they were hunting was waiting for them and he was not alone. Miles lost one of his men shot dead and another badly chopped about; and the scent, and what Miles could tell them, came to a dead end.

Then the photostats had arrived with their covering letter in London, and the word had gone out from Crossbow through the U. S. Embassy in Grosvenor Square. These extracts from Foreman's journals were deadly, bloodcurdling, and explosive. It was not too much to say that they could blow the world apart.

To anyone but high officers in the Pentagon, they would look and read like top-secret plans for an annihilating attack to be mounted on the Soviets in the near future. How Admiral Foreman had come to put them down neither Miles nor Hone nor anyone in Washington could suggest; but they were in existence, Foreman had to be their author, the man who had sent the photostats to London had them in his possession, and they were for sale.

The letter that came with the photostats made the intentions of its writer clear. Since he had killed an American agent in Regensburg, he would negotiate the sale of the journals only with British Intelligence. He would name his price at the proper time. If any attempt was made to run him to ground arrangements were already in existence for the journals to go at once to Moscow, as they

Illustrated by AL VETROMILE

would if his price was not met. The man who came from M. I. 5 to Berlin was to wait at the Café Lorraine in Lichtenstrasse. He would be met there, and he would be given his instructions for the subsequent steps he would take. The letter had been signed simply, "Mayerling."

The name went through and through Keen's mind as he sat back against the wall of the Café Lorraine. His orders had been simple and direct. A staff officer named Charlton Browning was in command of the operation. Keen was to make contact with Mayerling and agree to any price he cared to name. He was to get the journals by any means and under any circumstances.

Amery, Miles, and Colonel Hone had come to Berlin ahead of him, to wait at the grim gray building at 46, Augartenstrasse. Keen had come to Lichtenstrasse with his good friend Tom Coutts, the close-quarters fighter, to wait against the wall with his Czech whiskey and his nerve-racking tension while the smoke swirled and the girls came and went through the curtains to the street outside. . . .

A little before midnight the smoke swirled again as the curtains parted and a girl came in from Lichtenstrasse and down the steps along the wall. She had her hands in the pockets of a gray coat belted tightly at the waist. Her long, honey-colored hair fell to her shoulders; she moved her legs and feet with the deliberate grace of a model, coming down one step after another as though on the ramp of a fashion parade. At the foot of the steps she tossed her head and pulled her hair back from one side of her face. She waved to one of the men at the bar and came forward through the tables, pausing for a moment with a hand on someone's shoulder. There was a short exchange. She shrugged as though in acceptance of a refusal and moved away to sit with two others. She permitted herself to be embraced.

He watched her with interest and appreciation. She moved about again, straight, luscious, and slim. At another table more heads were shaken, and then she went past the man in the long raincoat to the bar. He saw that the bartender greeted her as an acquaintance, taking a moment from his work to make himself agreeable.

One or two people left and a few minutes later the gaunt man who had coughed called for the waiter, tossed some coins onto the tray, and followed them. Keen watched him go. When he looked back to the bar the girl was turning slowly to survey the room. She caught his eye and smiled, holding the tip of her tongue between white teeth. She raised a tentative brow and waited for his answering recognition. He kept his face blank; but after a moment she put her empty glass on the bar and came past the piano to his table. She laid her hand on his shoulder without hesitation or embarrassment. She leaned forward and took his glass, tasted it and screwed up her face in a pretty grimace.

She put the glass down and said, "Hullo."

"Wie geht's, Fraulein?"

"No please, English. You are alone?"

He indicated the two empty chairs and she said, "Then I may sit down?"

"If you wish to."

He let her pull out a chair for herself and she sat facing him with her elbows on the table.

"My name is Anna."

"And you'd like me to order you a drink. First."

She met his eyes and laughed softly. "I am not for you. The other little girls, yes, but not me, even if you would like it."

He smiled and raised one eyebrow. "What are you for, even if I would like it?"

"No drink. Just to talk, and perhaps a cigarette. You do not want to tell me who you are?"

"What's in a name?"

She moved her shoulders slightly. "It makes it easier to talk. Why have you come here?"

"For the music."

"The music is terrible. You are here because you wait for someone. Perhaps for someone like me."

Behind the girl Anna he saw the tall man with the long ulster climbing the steps to the curtains and the street outside. He looked across to the mirror behind the bar again, to the steady eyes and the battered face above the duffel coat. He moved his left hand into sight on the table with the thumb and forefinger together, and Coutts turned at the bar to face the room. The mutter of conversation seemed to fade.

He said, "Anna. Would you care to change your mind about the drink?"

She said, "I am to ask for a glass of cointreau." Her eyes came up. "But I do not want it."

He was sure she hadn't spoken to the waiter. His eyes flicked a rapid glance about the cellar, trying to fix in his mind the ones she had spoken to. After a moment he said without looking at her, "So Mayerling sent a girl."

She rose and stood with one hand flat on the table. "If you are ready," she said.

He wanted to watch the room for a few moments more. "Are you sure you don't want your cointreau?"

"It is only for you to know me, you were told that. Come now, he is waiting."

He went up the steps to Lichtenstrasse with the girl Anna, out into the cold and the dark. The street was almost deserted. When they had gone perhaps 50 yards a jeep of patrolling military police appeared from nowhere, passed slowly, turned the corner and disappeared in a thin flurry of snow. He looked back, and had a brief glimpse of a gaunt figure hurrying away from a doorway near the entrance to the Café Lorraine.

She strode ahead until another patrolling jeep went by in the opposite direction. She stopped abruptly and turned to watch it recede.

"That is the second jeep full of soldiers."

"They patrol the clock round, I thought everyone in Berlin knew that."

"You were to come alone, we were not to be followed."

"We're not being followed. And while you stand here there's nowhere for anyone to follow us to."

"He said if there was any sign at all, I am to leave you."

"There's no one after us. The street's empty, see for yourself."

She hesitated and then after a minute of wavering indecision she went on again for three or four more blocks until they came to a gap in the jagged walls. She looked up and down the street and pulled him quickly away from the pavement.

"Quickly," she said, "after me, run."

They scrambled up a heap of rubble into the ruins and over and down the other side across a weed-grown crater. She took his hand and led the way in darkness through a shattered wall, down some steps into an echoing passageway. The passage went for 20 or 30 yards to more steps and ruins and rubble and then they came out in another deserted street where a small Volkswagen sedan stood at the curb.

She wrenched at its door and told him to get in, and ran around to its other side to slide in behind the wheel. It skidded on the wet concrete as she pulled it away from the curb and charged headlong at the first corner on the right.

He thought they were heading in the direction of Charlottenburg for the first 15 minutes until she crossed the Spandau Canal and twisted and turned and he lost his bearings. After another 10 minutes of slipping and sliding she swung hard left and the car jolted into a vacant area and drew up in the shadow of a high wall. She climbed out of the car and slammed its door.

"This way."

They went through a hole in the wall and along the base of another to an archway. The girl went ahead through a dark alley until they came to a door with a thin line of light showing beneath it. She knocked and stood back. There were more steps, a bolt grated, and he heard the steps again. He pushed the door open and went into the room.

2

IT WAS LIT by a dusty naked globe in a fixture on the wall, bare and empty but for a single packing-case in one corner. The man sitting on the packing case didn't trouble to look up as they came in; smoke curled up round his shadowed face from the cigarette drooping in the corner of his mouth. He was studying a long-barreled Mauser pistol, working its action back and forth. The long raincoat was now flung back on his shoulders like a cape, and the deepest shadow on his face was the patch on his blind eye.

Anna shut the door and said, "Otto. Here he is."

The man addressed as Otto peered down at the pistol.

"The man he wants," she said. "The man I was to meet."

Something about the pistol seemed to fascinate Otto. He let them wait until after a long moment he said, still looking down, "Herr Gregory Keen. I was not completely sure he was alone in Lichtenstrasse. Were you, Anna?"

"I do not know."

"Were you followed, do you think?"

"No, we were not."

Otto felt the balance of the pistol, weighing it up and down in his hand. He reached into his pocket for a clip, slipped it into the butt, and worked the action again to slide a round into the breech. He looked up at last. He showed his teeth in a lean hollow grin and raised the cocked and loaded pistol to Keen's face.

"Was she followed, Herr Keen?"

Keen felt a breath of cold wind on the back of his neck. He said, "She told you."

"You tell me."

Keen said, "No." And then, "I'm very much taken with the act, chum, but don't keep me waiting all night. If you're not Mayerling, where is he?"

Otto lowered the pistol. "That's what I like to see," he said, "a fellow with nerve. If the others knew what we were doing they would have to kill you, first thing, eh? To give themselves more time to hunt Mayerling down. What was it like, waiting there at your table in Lichtenstrasse for someone to walk in and shoot you?"

Keen said, "Next time, make an appointment for me in a place where you can get a decent drink."

"You see, Anna? He even makes a little joke."

Anna leaned back against the wall. In the dim angled light from the naked globe her face was of extraordinary beauty.

Keen said, "This is all very *gemutlich* but Mayerling's the man I want to see. What about it?"

Otto said, "You were to go to the Café Lorraine, and wait."

"I waited."

"You were to be alone. You were told that no one would watch, or follow you."

"I came alone, with Anna."

Otto stared; and then he reached abruptly behind the packing case to drag a portable high-frequency radio round into the light. He switched it on and pulled up the telescoped rods of its aerial.

"So you came alone," he said. "Reception in here is not good, but good enough." He adjusted

the dial and waited for the tubes to warm. There were some thin and garbled background voices at first and then the set said suddenly in the broad accents of the Northumbrian Division: *"That's all right about you, mate. Find a spare jeep and come and get your ears frozen off looking for them yourself. Sitting in front of the fire at the bloody wireless—"* Something crackling and indistinguishable followed, and then—*"a girl with him. Half way along Lichtenstrasse, then they must have ducked into the flaming ruins."*

"Cover your grid," said the radio in another voice. *"Fox Roger, Fox Roger."*

Other voices came in and there was a confused recitation of street names and grid references. Otto reached down and switched off the set. His one eye glittered at Keen.

"You see?"

Keen was elaborately unconcerned. "What am I supposed to see?"

"You were watched, and now they search for you. You do not seem to appreciate exactly what is in our hands."

"We know what you've got."

"But only what we have shown you. The rest is worse, much worse, and with it we pipe and you follow wherever we lead. We will surrender Admiral Foreman's journals to you only if you keep to our terms. If you make another attempt to trace us with radio patrols the journals will go where we have promised, to the other side of Berlin, and when you hear of them again it will be from the Kremlin."

He stood up from the packing case and moved the radio aside with his foot. "Take him with you," he said to Anna, "and this time go direct, it does not matter if he sees where he was brought." He looked sidelong at Keen. "There are ten thousand empty shells of houses like this one in Berlin, my friend. If we meet again it will be in another."

Anna said, "The patrols have lost him. We should continue with it now, before the others—"

Otto said sharply, "Be quiet, Anna. You will do as I say."

"She's right, you know," Keen said. "If you hold this thing up you're crazy."

"For you," said Otto, "there are only orders. No suggestions, no questions, only orders. Now open the door and go first, and when you are at the end of the passage, wait there for Anna."

Keen stood at the end of the alley beneath the archway, listening to the low murmur of their voices from the room behind him. Outside in the ruins there was only the silence, the snow swirling down, the dark, and a gaunt lonely figure scurrying forward bent against the night wind. The light in the room went out. Anna came quickly along the passage and brushed past him as she went through the arch. He followed her out to the car.

"Where now?" he said.

"I am to leave you in Lichtenstrasse."

They climbed in and she reversed the Volkswagen out of the rubble and over the curb. Its motor was cold; it blew a cloud of smoke and steam into the street.

They had turned west towards the canal when Keen said, "That fellow back there—Otto. He must be terribly concerned about you, bringing you into an operation like this."

"Why should you say that?"

"Don't tell me they kept it to themselves. Mayerling killed a man in Vienna to get the journals in the first place and another one on the way to Berlin."

She drew her breath in sharply.

"And if the others get on to Foreman's journals, I won't be the only one they'll come after." He asked irrelevantly, "How old are you?"

She turned her head in surprise. "Twenty-four."

They drove in silence for a while, bumping across the potholes in the bridge over the canal. The car was closed and its windows were misting from their breath.

Keen said, "It doesn't matter a damn, but I'm interested to know what you're doing mixed up with a type like Mayerling."

"I know nothing of Mayerling. What I do, I do for Otto Richter because once, he was kind to me."

So the fellow's name was Richter. Keen said carefully, "This is a brutal game. You'd better cut and run while there's still time."

"Are you trying to make another joke? It is not funny."

"I was never joking less."

She uttered the contemptuous little laugh he had heard before. "Why don't you offer me money?"

The laugh went under his skin and he felt a sudden gust of rage. He said savagely, "What are you and those two murderous lunatics working your extortion *for*? Bottle-tops?"

She flinched and her face twisted in the glow from the panel as though he had struck her. "It is not me," she said, "I was only to take you to Otto. They did not tell me what happened in Vienna, I didn't know!"

There was a glow on the misted rear window from the lights of a car coming behind. He pulled himself together and said quietly, "Will they send you again?"

"I think yes."

"Well, next time, do your best to see that I get to Mayerling."

"I tried, in the house with Otto."

The glow was brighter. He raised himself in the seat and reached back to clear a patch on the rear window. The car was about 200 yards behind and coming up fast.

He said quickly, "Turn left, here."

"But we go—"

"Turn!"

She hesitated and he took the wheel and swung hard left. The car lurched and slithered round the corner, throwing her violently against him. He watched the rear; the lights of the second car approached the corner and it careened around after them, heeled over at a desperate angle. The interval between them was unchanged.

He said, "Just where are we?"

She began to tell him: "Past the Ringbahn, coming to Turmstrasse and Siemensplatz—"

"How far to Moabit or the Spree bridges?" He was thinking of the radio patrols and their sectors.

"Fifteen minutes."

The car behind had picked up 30 yards. "Too far, they'll run all over us. You must do exactly what I tell you." They were coming to the intersection of a narrow street. "Round here!"

She made the turn and again the car behind followed. "What must I do?"

"Keep dodging, every turn you come to."

She pointed ahead. "There?"

"Yes, there!"

She lifted her foot and he snarled at her, "Don't slow up, tear straight around them! It's the only way we'll get far enough in front!"

3

She managed to scrape wildly round more corners. They picked up a few yards on the car behind. One black street led to another, the pursuit gaining as they drove straight ahead, losing to the nimble little car on its darting turns. Then they came to a quarter of narrower winding streets where he thought they might be able to execute a maneuver.

He said, "Anna, listen. Keep turning, but watch for a break in the walls near a corner. Not at the end of a block, but a vacant lot just around the corner. Have you got that?"

"Yes." They were coming to another intersection and again she swung the car round.

"When you get to it, charge straight in and jump out of the car and run for it. Do you understand, you have to make a run for it in the ruins."

They took another corner and another with the car behind grimly refusing to be shaken off. They turned once again and before they were completely round he saw a gap in the walls and an area cleared within. He shouted, "Now! Get in there!"

She wrenched at the wheel and the car leaped in the air as it crossed the curb, bounced crabwise into the rubble, tipped up on one side and down again and crunched to a sudden stop. He flung open her door and thrust her out.

"Run for it! Through the walls!"

He slid across the seat behind the wheel, hearing the whining roar of the car behind coming up to the corner. The ruins on three sides shone cold in the harsh glare of their lights. Anna called frantically, "You too!" and he shouted again, "Run!"

He saw her turn and scramble towards the rear of the lot, to an empty black doorway in the far wall. He had the Volkswagen in reverse and Anna was disappearing through the door when the pursuing car shot past the lot and its motor cut and its brakes went on for a sliding stop. He hammered backwards out of the lot with the Volkswagen's tiny engine screeching. He saw the other car plainly no more than 50 yards away, sideways in the street and coming up on to the curb to complete its turn. He cut his margin to nothing, waiting for an instant to see if they were leaving the car to go after the girl. It bumped down off the curb and he went ahead at full throttle, back the way they had come.

They almost caught him on the first corner with a burst of powerful acceleration, and then he was twisting and turning again and just barely contriving to hold his own. He had no idea where he was or in which direction he was going; he was trusting to luck and hoping to strike the Spree north of the Tiergarten. He tried every trick he knew but the car behind clung a few lengths in the rear. Then he took a blind right-hand corner and saw at once that he had made a mistake; he was in a wider street that stretched ahead without a curve or an intersection for more than half a mile. He said aloud, "That's torn it," and watched in the mirror as the lights came up behind.

He swung the Volkswagen in suicidal scallops from side to side of the street, trying to block them off. The first intersection was coming up but the closed street was too long. He was trying to get into position to swing the Volkswagen completely round in the road without crashing into the car behind when lights appeared coming towards them from some distance ahead. Two hundred yards away he saw that it was a jeep of the military patrol. It pulled in to the side of the street and then swung round broadside to block the wild progress of the two approaching cars. Three men leaped out. He pulled over and stood on his brakes at the last moment. The pursuing car swept by, mounted the sidewalk at high speed and cleared the jeep by inches. One of the soldiers jumped for his life out of its path. It rocked and swayed back into the street and sped away, its red taillight receding, its exhaust note rising to a frantic echoing crescendo.

He climbed out of the car and stood with a hand on its door. The street suddenly seemed very quiet and still. Then a foot scraped and the soldier who had been almost run down said, "What the hell?" and a corporal with a Sten gun held at the ready came forward from the jeep.

"Hold it right where you are, Jerry," said the corporal. "Been playing chase-the-leader in your little People's Car, eh?"

He said, "If you coves had had your fingers out, you could have joined the merry throng. You're too late now, the party's over."

The corporal made a sign to the driver of the jeep and he turned on its spotlight and swiveled it round.

"Now," said the corporal, "who would you be?"

"The name is Keen, and get that bloody spotlight out of my face,"

The corporal lowered the muzzle of the Sten gun and came more or less to attention. "Yes, sir," he said.

"Where are we?"

"Elberstrasse. Moabit."

"Anyone get the registration of that car?" There was an embarrassed silence. "Well, you can make yourselves useful, you can give me an escort back to 46 Augartenstrasse. Get your jeep out of the street and lead the way."

Keen slipped back into the car and started it up. He waited while they moved the jeep and then drew up beside it. He thrust his head out the window.

"You fellows." Their heads turned together. "I was glad to see you."

The corporal bent to the window. "What happened tonight, Major? After we lost you."

"You blokes talk too much on the air."

They drove off and he followed. When they had gone a few hundred yards his fingers began to flutter, and within half a mile he was shaking from head to foot.

4

IT WAS A BLEAK concrete structure that had housed one of Goering's departments back in the days of the glorious Third Reich. Now 46 Augartenstrasse was partly restored and had a radio transmitter with a steel mast rising from its roof, and 22 lines of its own reaching out into the city of still monstrous, still incredible destruction.

Tom Coutts was pacing up and down in the snow outside when Keen drew up and climbed out of the Volkswagen. "How did it go?" said Coutts.

"We have to try again."

"I lost you in the rubble, but I don't think she saw me."

"She didn't."

"Next time I'll try to be a bit closer."

They went into the building past two switchboards and their operators and up a flight of stone stairs. There were men in uniform coming and going in the corridors and the clacking of teletype machines from open doors. Keen led the way to a large room with leather chairs grouped about an electric fire at one end and a long conference table scattered with telephones and documents down its center. It had maps of Berlin and West Germany on the walls; an open cabinet near the fire served as a bar. There were five men and a woman in the room.

Three of the men were Hone, Amery, and Miles. The fourth was a codes-and-records officer named MacGregor, and the fifth, in uniform with the red tabs of the staff and two rows of ribbons, was Brigadier Charlton Browning, D. S. O. and Bar, M. C. He was a large beefy man with short curling dark hair and small eyes; his manner was brusque, overbearing, and aggressive.

As Keen and Coutts came in there was an abrupt inquiring silence, with all eyes turned toward them. Keen shook his head. Amery stood up from the table, Christopher Miles went to the bar cabinet, and Tom Coutts leaned back against the wall.

"Brigadier Browning," Amery said, "this is Keen."

Keen said, "How do you do, sir?" and Browning stared at the corduroy trousers and desert boots and grunted.

Miles raised a hand in greeting. "I hear you've had a wild ride," he said, "we were just listening to the guys on the air." He held up a Scotch bottle and glass. "Purely medicinal?"

Keen said, "Right to the top, I need it." He stripped off his coat and threw it over a chair.

The woman was sitting beside Colonel Hone. She had cropped black hair with a fringe across the forehead and shining dark eyes under heavily penciled brows. Pendant rings hung from her ears. She was wearing a severe black suit and spike-heeled shoes; her legs were long, and muscular at the calves like those of a dancer.

She smiled brightly and spoke with a strong German accent that made her choice of words sound slightly grotesque. "What about me, fellows, doesn't anyone present me to the nice-looking major?"

Amery winced visibly and flicked at his mustache. He said drily, "Of course, I beg your pardon. This is Ronda Natalie—er—Bohlen von Heidlitz, Major Keen."

Keen acknowledged the introduction and she said, "I answer to just Ronda." She watched him as he went round the table to Miles and his glass of Scotch. "He doesn't look terribly desperate, does he? Not enough to liquidate our Manfred Gottlieb von Mayerling." She was addressing the room at large.

" 'Manfred Gottlieb'," said Keen. "So we know him."

Amery sat down and shuffled some papers about. "Since the last hour or so," he said. "Things have been coming together. But tell us what happened to you, first. We're with you till you left that dive in Lichtenstrasse with the girl."

The code man MacGregor made notes and when Keen quoted the license number of Anna's car MacGregor picked up a telephone and said

quietly, "Give me records." At the end Browning took a stand at the head of the table.

"Well, you managed to bungle it, Keen," he said. "Were they after the girl, or you, or both of you?"

"When I dropped her off they came after me."

"But did they know you'd dropped her off, that's what I'd like to hear."

"When we slid into the rubble it could have looked like an evasion and nothing else. They were pressing us hard but there was nothing to show the girl went into the ruins."

"Nothing but the fact that you were the only one left in the car."

Keen said distinctly, "The back window was fogged."

Amery shuffled his papers about again and said, "The thing we have to consider is that now, we're not the only people looking for Mayerling."

Keen said, "What have you found on him?"

Amery said, "He's using his real name, he's not hiding anything there. He was originally one of Skorzeny's paratroop captains, he'd be about 35 now. He spent a few years in Spain when it was about the only place outside the Fatherland they were welcome, and then he showed up in another nest of them in the Argentine. From there he tried to get into the States from Cuba, we have that from Colonel Hone. After that he dropped out of sight for a while and came to light again in Vienna, and until a couple of months ago he was a ski instructor at a resort not far from Greiskirchen."

Browning said, "Keen can keep himself amused with all that stuff any time he likes. What I want to get straightened out is a plan of attack on this fellow."

Keen said in disbelief, "You want to *attack* him?"

"That's what I said. Would you rather we sat around waiting for the journals to fall into the wrong hands?"

"Start hacking at Mayerling and that's the very thing you can be sure of."

Browning said, "Are you under orders, or aren't you?"

Keen looked at Browning with his level gray-eyed stare. "I'm under orders to get those journals on Mayerling's terms, not start blundering about waving brass knuckles under his nose."

Browning's neck seemed to swell but before he could get his mouth open Amery said smoothly, "Yes, well, could we get on with it? It's evident by now that Mayerling's not working alone. There's this fellow Richter and the girl Anna, and they appear to be organized. We have to decide how we're going to handle it, when and if we hear from Mayerling again."

Browning said, "We shouldn't have to concern ourselves with hearing from Mayerling. Keen had the girl in his hands; we should be going to work on her now."

Amery said, "But we haven't got the girl and the situation has to be coped with as it stands."

"There's only one line," said Browning, "and it's perfectly obvious. Tighten the patrols. Call out every squad in Berlin. Follow Keen at all costs and when he gets to Mayerling, move in and take him by force. If we have to accept a few casualties that's too bad, but once we've got our hands on Mayerling we won't have to worry about the journals."

Colonel Hone said quietly, "I don't know that I see eye to eye with that."

"Neither do I," said Keen.

"All right," said Browning to Keen, "you know so much better, let's hear what you want us to do."

Keen said, "I'll tell you what to do. Get those jeeps of yours off the streets and out of sight and keep them there. Tell your men to get off the air and stay off. You keep every trooper of yours so far away from me they'll think I'm a leper, and leave Mayerling to Tom Coutts and me till we call you in. Because if there's another show like tonight's do you know what you'll hear?"

Browning was glaring with unconcealed hostility. "What will I hear?"

"You'll hear Foreman's journals being broadcast word for word from Radio Gorlitz, Radio Stettin, Breslau, Landsberg, everywhere they have a transmitter. They'll be rubbing their hands together in every little Red roach-pit of traitors from one end of the world to the other. For six years they've been screaming that the U. S. is out for war and with Foreman's journals they'll have something for the first time to show that what they're screaming is true. Mayerling knows what he's holding and he knows how to use it. He's sitting in a hole somewhere with a handful of strings leading straight to us and when he pulls them we jump and we like it. So we don't touch Mayerling and we don't touch the girl, and when Mayerling tells us how much he wants, we pay. Richter knows it. Richter said it. And I'm saying it now—hands off all of them."

Browning said, "The others can afford to go after Mayerling and put on pressure, and so can we."

"We can not. Those documents of Foreman's can't blow up in their faces, only in ours. They have something to gain and nothing to lose. We can only lose."

"I don't agree," said Browning. "I say that your very reasons make it imperative to get our hands on Mayerling before the others, and I'm right."

Keen said, "He's made it clear: If we go after him, the journals go across the border then and there."

"We have to use direct methods on him. And if you're not up to it, if you can't get hold of Mayerling and apply them, let's have a man in who can."

Keen said, "What am I short of, your blithe acceptance of casualties? You're so willing with

the mailed fist, just as long as you don't have to swing it yourself."

Amery slapped a hand down hard on the table. "Damn it," he said, "let's cut this out!" His eyes snapped at Browning. "You know who Keen is, sir, and what he represents. We can't have this discord here!"

"I know we're in a devilish tight corner with no slack to be taken up if Keen makes the wrong move."

Amery said, "As I see it there are two hazards and we have to decide which is the less. If we go quietly and let Mayerling take his own time, there's the possibility of the others finding him and seizing him first. If we go after him ourselves we're inviting him to keep his word and send the journals to Moscow. We have to decide which it's going to be."

Keen said, "We could have been out of the hunt already on the strength of the radio patrols. According to Richter they're giving us another chance and I say, let's take it."

Colonel Hone said, "That makes sense to me."

Browning wanted to start the argument all over again. He said, "Now look, all of you. The essence of the whole affair is time and it's no use trying to tell me—"

There was a knock and a man in uniform appeared at the door. He went round the table to Amery with a slip of yellow paper, and after a whispered word Amery took the slip and he left.

Keen bent to read the slip over Amery's shoulder and Browning said, "Well?"

Amery said, "This just came in, phoned through from an all-night picture house in Kurfurstendamm." He looked down at the slip. "Keen is to go to the fifth house from the corner of Opernplatz in Krummstrasse, left-hand side. Through the house and down some steps, oh one four five hours."

5

THERE WAS A general stir in the room and the slip passed from hand to hand. Amery, Miles, Hone, and Browning gathered with their heads together, talking to the woman Ronda von Heidlitz, and Coutts came away from the wall to stand close to Keen.

Keen muttered, "Who is she?"

"She came with Browning."

"What's he thinking of?"

Browning had his back to them and after a moment Miles detached himself from the group and drifted past the bar cabinet to Keen. He said softly, "Let's blow." Out in the corridor Keen said, "There was nothing this time about not going armed. Get it for me, will you, Tom?" And Coutts hurried away along the corridor to a door near its far end.

Miles said, "If you haven't caught on yet, this time I'm coming some of the way. What about Coutts?"

"Coutts too, but for Heaven's sake keep well clear and out of sight, and don't try to follow."

Coutts reappeared holding a Luger by the barrel in one hand and a street map of Berlin in the other. "Charged up and one in the spout," he said. Browning's voice came angrily through the door and they heard the woman Ronda speaking rapidly in German. They went along the corridor and down the stairs. Keen stopped in the entrance to consult the street map; Krummstrasse was about two miles away, past Magdeburgplatz and near the overhead tracks of the *Hochsbahn*. He folded the map and they went out to Anna's Volkswagen.

Miles said, "We'll arrive somewhere about the Opernplatz corner a few minutes after you."

"Don't come any closer."

"Not unless we think you're in trouble. Good luck."

Keen climbed into the car and drove off, leaving them standing at the curb. He went slowly, watching the streets behind in the mirror. His ideas were far from clear about the pursuit towards Moabit with Anna. The car had appeared from nowhere to give chase, and they hadn't been followed all the way from the house with Richter, they had been driving for eight or 10 minutes before the car appeared behind them. So how had it been contrived?

He came to Opernplatz and looked at his watch. He had seven minutes in hand. He drew up on one side of the square near Krummstrasse and flicked out his lights. The square was dark, silent, and empty, with the shells of three- and four-story houses all round. He waited for five of his seven minutes, scanning the area closely for a sign of movement, from the jagged line of the walls to the bare sticks of trees in the center of the platz.

He climbed out of the car, patted the hard shape of the Luger in his pocket, and walked slowly to the Krummstrasse corner. He went past the first four houses on the right and crossed the street to the fifth on the opposite side. It stood back a few feet from the pavement, roofless and stark like so many thousands of others, and he paused for a moment looking up, marveling again at the magnitude of the holocaust that had descended on Berlin. He remembered the promise the great statesman had made: "They have sown the wind; they shall reap the whirlwind." Never had the ancient saying been so true, and what an appalling price had been paid.

He shook himself and went through the empty doorway into the walls. He picked his way through the rubble to another door, striking matches as he went. In a room at the rear of the house, in what had once been its kitchen, he found the square black hole and the steps going down. He thought that Mayerling was choosing odd rat-holes to keep

his rendezvous in and felt his way down through the opening to a closed door. He pushed gently and it creaked open. There was a pale flickering glow of light.

He went through the door and down three more steps till he could see into the room, and stopped short, the hairs rising on the back of his neck. The stub of a candle guttered on the floor and beside it a man sat propped against the wall. It was not Otto Richter. It was a man Keen didn't know and never would, for his throat had been cut from ear to ear.

Keen looked back up to the square opening above. There was not a whisper from the cellar or the house overhead. He went down slowly and crossed the cellar. The candle-flame flickered so that the shadow of the man propped against the wall jumped and swayed, giving him a ghastly life when his own was gone. The arm seemed to jerk in small scratching movements as though his lifeless hand was trying to write something on the cellar floor.

There was a faint distant sound and Keen turned his head to listen. It came again; out in the ruins or the street nearby someone was coughing in a racking spasm. He listened intently and thought suddenly of the gaunt man who had coughed in the Café Lorraine.

Then there was another slight sound from above, and a fragment of rubble bounced down the cellar steps. He threw himself flat and kicked the candle over, and immediately there was a spat of flame and the crash of a shot from the steps at the cellar door. The second shot spattered chips of stone in his face and he rolled over and brought out the Luger and fired once at the pitch darkness of the steps. He was completely deafened from the explosions in the confined space, and blind. The third shot from the doorway tugged at his sleeve as he crawled across the cellar floor, and the duel in the dark went on with the corpse as its only witness.

6

Christopher Miles and Coutts heard the shooting from the far side of Opernplatz away from the Krummstrasse corner. After the first confused flurry there were two more shots and then silence. Miles rammed their car to a stop at the fifth house and they leaped out together. Coutts held a flashlight at the empty window, standing to one side, and in its beam Miles ran quickly through to the first doorway inside. He took cover by the wall and beckoned Coutts in after him, and they went carefully as far as the kitchen and the cellar entrance.

Coutts shone the flashlight down the steps and Miles called, "Anyone down there?" There was no answer. He held his pistol out and went slowly into the hole as far as the open door, and Coutts said suddenly, "Hold it!"

"What is it?"

Coutts stripped off his duffel coat and threw it past Miles down to the bottom of the steps. He shone the flashlight on it and they heard Keen say at once, "Wise move, Coutts. Come on down."

He was crouched in a corner beside the steps and below the doorway.

He tapped his right ear and said loudly, "I'm as deaf as a post."

Coutts said, "Thought you might be."

"The fellow was shooting from up there at the door." Keen pointed to the man still propped against the wall. "That was waiting."

Miles looked and said with horror, "Good Lord. Is it Richter?"

Keen could hear him faintly as though from a distance away. He said, "What was that?"

"I said, is it Richter?"

"No. No idea who the poor devil is."

Coutts said, "I'm going up top, we don't want to get caught again like you were."

Keen said, "Have you got R. T. in your car?"

Miles said, "Sure."

"We'd better call in for an ambulance and some men to make a search round here, not that I expect it'll do any good." Coutts was half way up the steps when Keen said, "And see what they've turned up on the registration of Anna's car."

Miles was bending over the man by the wall. He said, "What happened exactly?"

Keen said, "Something bloody unsettling. See that stub of the candle? I heard him on the steps and kicked it over, but before it went out he had two good shots. And he missed with both of them."

Miles said, "As far as I can see, he was just a terrible shot."

"No one could be as bad as that. It makes you think. And this is twice in three hours that someone's known where I was going to be and when. How's it being done?"

"Whoever the guy was, banging away at you, he beat it when he heard us coming."

"You didn't see anyone?"

"Not a thing."

"When the shooting started there was someone out in the street."

Keen told Miles about the coughing man, and Miles said, "These damned ruins, you can go through them in every direction."

Steps came crunching through the house overhead and Keen called, "Wait there, Coutts, we're coming up." He said to Miles, "I need some air, if I have to look at that fellow again I'll be sick."

They went up the steps and as they were going through the house Coutts said, "The blokes are on their way, I talked to MacGregor and Amery."

Keen said, "What about the car?"

"It belongs to a drive-yourself renting service in Wilmersdorf."

Keen said, "I was hoping it was the girl's. After this, we need her."

"Maybe she rented it herself," said Miles, "and it's a lead no matter who signed for it."

"But I don't want to wait till morning."

"She's going to be hard to find."

"She mightn't be. But there's other work to be done, if you'll get on to it for me with Amery."

Miles said, "Just name it."

Keen said, "That Café Lorraine. Amery knows a lot about it, it's more than just a den for odd types and the troops." While Keen was talking, the sound of approaching vehicles came from the direction of Opernplatz. A moment later lights glared and a Mercedes-Benz ambulance and two jeeps turned into Krummstrasse and drew up beside them. Men came tumbling out. Keen directed them to the cellar and two stretcher men went first and the rest followed them into the house.

Miles listened to Keen again and then said, "This is all very fine, fellow, but why does it have to be you?"

"She knows me, Christopher."

"So does the guy who was doing the shooting. Well, you'd better take our car, you may want to communicate."

Keen said, "I'll stick to the Volkswagen. It'll make a calling card and it's a good little tumbril; I'm getting fond of it. One more thing, who the hell is that von Heidlitz woman?"

"Someone of Browning's. He and Amery seem to think a lot of her but we haven't been told more than her name."

"Neither have I."

Miles watched him walk away and disappear round the corner towards Anna's car. He said to Coutts, "There goes a very cool character."

"He's not so cool," said Coutts. "He's shaken up worse than I like to see."

"Do you two always work together?"

"We've been together a bit, sir," said Coutts. "Now and again."

The ambulance men came out with their stretcher, laden now and covered with a sheet. They drove off and soon the men from the jeeps appeared to say that they had found nothing in the ruins. A few minutes later the three remaining vehicles turned to follow each other out to the square, and Krummstrasse was silent again—and empty but for the watcher high in a building on the opposite side, the man who had coughed.

7

KEEN CAME into the Café Lorraine through the curtains from Lichtenstrasse for the second time that night and stood on the steps against the wall. He watched the room with a guarded and careful scrutiny. As far as he could see only three or four of the girls paid any attention to his arrival. He went to the bar and stood at the end nearest the dais, and when the bartender came up he thought of the corrosive Czech whiskey and ordered gin. His neighbor a few feet away was a thin girl in a tight shining black dress, perched on a stool alone. She was no more than 19 or 20.

He took his time, listening carefully for someone to address the bartender by name, and when he heard it he drank down his gin and rapped sharply with his empty glass. The bartender returned. He was a short, pasty-faced man with bags under his eyes and a few strands of dark hair plastered over his scalp.

"Again, sir?" he said politely.

Keen paid for the drink with a 100 *Deutschmark* bill and the bartender looked at it uncertainly.

"You have nothing smaller, sir?"

"What's the matter with that?"

"I have just changed another of these, one after another tonight. If you would be so kind—"

"You mightn't have to make change at all. What would you do for it, Rudi, all of it?"

"For this," said the bartender cheerfully, "I would dive naked in the ice of the Plötzensee."

Keen said, "I shouldn't think that would be necessary."

Rudi the bartender looked at both sides of the bill and held it out as if to admire the quality of its engraving.

"What *would* be necessary?" he said softly.

"A little information," said Keen. "I was here earlier tonight. Do you remember?"

The bartender shrugged vaguely. "Many come and go. I could not say that I remember you."

Keen said, "I left with a girl. After she came to my table by the piano." He pointed. "Over there."

The bartender made another non-committal gesture and allowed his eyes to wander. He was still holding the bill.

Keen said, "She said her name was Anna. For a hundred marks, I want the rest of her name and where you think I might find her."

"I am sorry, sir. Perhaps I could inquire—"

"If you want that bill you'll have to do better, or start your Plötzensee diving. Try again."

"I am here to mix drinks and see nothing."

"You saw the girl, she was here at the bar and you were talking to her. She was wearing a belted gray coat, a girl with long fair hair."

"You are mistaken, sir, I saw no such girl tonight. I can tell you nothing. If you do not want another drink . . ." The bartender's voice trailed off.

Keen indicated the bill and said, "Perhaps one of those isn't enough. If you have a price, name it."

"As I told them before, sir," said the bartender, "I have no price." He laid the bill down flat on the bar. "I have learned that it does not pay."

Keen said slowly, "You told who before?"

The bartender stared for an instant; then he said, "I am confused, the hours here are long. If you will pardon me."

Keen said, "Just a minute. Who else was down here asking for Anna?"

The bartender turned away and busied himself with ice cubes and bottles and glasses. Keen caught his eye in the mirror and he turned again quickly and leaned forward over the bar. He whispered with intensity, "Leave me alone! I know nothing, I see nothing. Find her somewhere else, because I am not an informer, you understand? And I wish to live!"

He marched rapidly to the other end of the bar, making a show of pouring drinks for his other customers and looking to see if Keen was waiting.

Keen threw down some coins and moved across the room between the tables to sit in the corner removed from the bar. After a while there was a sudden stir in the room and all heads turned to the steps. Two uniformed German police troopers of the Provisional Government came down and crossed the room towards the piano. The violinist broke off in the middle of a phrase as the leading trooper gestured with his truncheon and stepped up on to the dais. It seemed that the violinist was being arrested; arms were waved and there was a short angry discussion, and the trooper bundled him off the dais through a curtained doorway behind the piano. When they came out again the violinist was wearing a homburg hat and a greatcoat with a heavy fur collar. He was still protesting heatedly as they took him up the steps and through the curtains to the street, leaving a murmur of comment and indifferent speculation behind them.

Keen called "Herr Oberst," and ordered once again, giving the German troopers time to deliver the violinist to 46, Augartenstrasse before he left the Café Lorraine. The girl who had been sitting a few feet from him at the bar watched till the waiter was on the other side of the room. Then she slipped down from her stool and wandered between the tables, the black skirt tight over her hips and thighs. She came towards him, swaying slightly with a suggestion of unsteadiness in her walk. Her mouth was half open and her eyes were heavy.

She put her coat over the back of a chair and moved round beside him, slipped an arm round his neck and insinuated herself down on to his knees. She kissed him lightly and her lips moved in the kiss to say, "Have you a hundred marks for *me?*"

Her breath smelled strongly of peppermint from Rudi's synthetic crème de menthe. Keen drew his head back from her mouth. "*Liebchen,* you're wasting your time."

"My name is Berta. I like you."

"I like you too, but tonight I'm drinking alone. Go back to the bar."

She put her arms round his neck again and said with her mouth only an inch from his, "There are fifty thousand girls in Berlin with no man to love. If Rudi does not want your hundred marks, I do." She kissed him again, and he turned his face away abruptly. She put a hand on his chin and turned his face round. "If you send me away I will not tell you, even for one hundred marks."

"All right, Berta," he said, "one drink." He reached round and pulled out a chair. "But whatever you do, get off my knees."

After one drink she wanted another and another and it was well after three in the morning before she consented to be taken out to Lichtenstrasse and the car. She was drunk enough now to be capricious and perverse and instead of giving him directions she announced that she wanted to go first to a night club in Kurfurstendamm. He cajoled and argued and persuaded and she began to cry, and then suddenly she became reasonable for a moment and told him to drive south towards the street half a mile away where she lived. When they arrived he drew up and left the motor idling, but her mood had changed again and she refused to get out of the car. He thought that he could strangle her with pleasure; with Anna becoming more vulnerable by the minute, he had to waste a precious half hour in this preposterous situation with some girl; and when she began to cry again he held two hundred-mark bills under her nose.

He said, "Berta! Do you want this money, or don't you?"

"You will take me to Kurfurstendamm, if I tell you now?"

"Yes, yes."

She said, "Kiss me first!" And a moment later, writhing, "Again!"

Then he drew breath and said, "Who is she, Berta?"

"Anna Hoffmann. She lives in Charlottenburg, near the Bahnhof in Kantstrasse."

"Do you know the number?"

"Seventeen. It is a rooming house, she is up under the roof. You go up four flights of stairs."

"How do you know?"

"Once I lived there too, and before, she came often to Lichtenstrasse."

"To work?"

Berta said, "To live." She opened her door. "There, that is your Anna for you. Come now."

Keen thrust the two bills down inside the front of her dress. The motor was still idling. He pushed her gently and said, "Out you get, I want to lock the car." She stepped out and he slammed the door shut and let out the clutch. He heard her scream something as the car moved and he drove off, leaving her standing at the curb. He steered with one hand, using the other to grope for some tissue to rub her lipstick and the stickiness of peppermint off his mouth. On the way he told himself it was ridiculous to feel that he had treated her badly; even if he had, he'd had no choice; but despite all that, he scarcely felt happy about it.

8

THE ROOMING house in Charlottenburg stood in a comparatively undamaged street with steps going up to its entrance and iron railings above basement windows on either side. The street itself was narrow; the tall old houses frowned at each other in a double row of bay windows, steep mansard roofs, and attic gables. Keen drove slowly past number 17, noting the light shining dimly through the glass panel beside its door. He turned and came back, and parked beyond the house on the opposite side of the street.

He went up the steps and tried the door. It opened and he went quietly into a hallway with doors on either hand, a passage going to the rear, and a stairway rising to the floors above. He went up past three landings to a narrower flight of stairs and a fourth. The light from below was faint but he could make out a short corridor under the sloping roof and a doorway facing the front of the house.

He knocked gently and waited. After a moment there was the sound of movement inside and he knocked again. Then he heard her say through the door, "Who is it?"

He answered softly, "It is Otto."

A line of light appeared on the floor, the lock grated, the door opened an inch. He put his shoulder against it and shoved his way quickly inside.

Anna stood staring in the middle of the room, with her hair tied in a ribbon and one hand clutching the jacket of her pajamas at the neck.

She said, "You."

"Yes, Anna, me. Take it quietly, you've nothing to be afraid of."

She breathed out slowly. "So they did not catch you."

"Obviously not."

She started to say something and stopped herself short. Then, "You should not be here! If Mayerling knew, or Otto—"

He said, "I've come to return your car."

He looked about the room. It had two small windows set in the wall and a skylight in the low angled ceiling. Anna had been on a couch made up with sheets and blankets in one corner.

He went to one of the windows to look out and down to the street below.

"I will call someone," she said. "I will call Frau Grunewald, downstairs."

He said without turning, "You've no intention of calling anyone, don't be so damn silly."

"How did you find me?" she said after a moment.

"It was easy. It was altogether too easy. Your price was two hundred marks—" he chuckled softly —"and some of my time, which has absolutely no value at all." He came away from the window. "Have you been able to tell them about the car that chased us to Moabit?"

Anna went to the curtained recess without answering and came out with a shawl round her shoulders. She sat on the bed.

"Well?"

"I have told Otto, yes."

"And what did Otto say?"

"He said I was to return here, and wait."

"Richter told you to come back here alone?"

"I have nowhere else."

"But alone."

"Yes!"

Keen gave her a cigarette and lit for them both. He said, "Otto has a fine disregard for your future."

"He said I was in no danger."

"Good Lord, hasn't it penetrated yet The hunt for Mayerling is on and you could be included. What do you think I'm here for?"

"But Otto told me I could not be traced through the car."

"Never mind what Otto Richter said, listen to me. From now on we can't afford to let you out of our sight. Someone of ours has to be with you night and day. After what happened two hours ago you're walking a tightrope, the three of you—you and Richter *and* Mayerling. Time is running out for you by the second. The Russians are after you, they've been to Lichtenstrasse already. And if they get hold of you they won't pay you for the journals, they'll grind them out of you, and when they let you off the conveyor belt you'll be fit for nothing but an insane asylum, if you're alive."

"But I could tell them nothing! I don't even know where he hides."

"Richter does, and you know where they could find Richter. They'd tear it out of you, Anna. There's no way to resist them. There's never been anything so pitiless, there's—"

"Stop it!" she cried. "Stop it, I won't listen to you!"

"You have to listen to me!"

She put her face in her hands and began to cry. "I didn't know what I was doing—it did not seem so dreadful when he told me—"

He watched her for a moment and then said, "What are you crying for? For what you and your chums are doing, or because you're afraid?"

She shook her head numbly and Keen turned and went to the window to look down to the street again. It was still empty; the Volkswagen stood at the curb alone. He came back to the couch and lifted her up. "Anna," he said, "look at me." He took her hands away from her face. "Where is Mayerling?"

"I do not know. That was all I was to do—find you at the Café Lorraine and drive you to Otto. He told me that after that I would have nothing more to do with it, and I believed him."

"But you surely weren't doing it for nothing."

"He promised he would take me away from this horrible graveyard of ruins. I thought it was a way to escape from it and never see it again."

Keen said, "If you ever want to escape from Berlin, now's the time to make up your mind which side you're on. You have to get hold of Richter for me again, now."

"I could try."

"Is there a telephone in the house?"

"On the ground floor. But the old woman, Frau Grunewald, she never sleeps."

"Well, fix your face and get some clothes on, quickly," he said. "You're coming with me."

He kept watch on the street while she dressed behind the curtain. She came out and brushed her hair in front of the mirror, and when she was ready he took a little blue beret from the table and sat it on top of her head.

"Keep your ears warm," he said.

"It does not come over my ears," she said, and arranged it at the proper angle.

He said, "Well, come on."

Anna said stiffly as though making a little speech, "I am very glad that the men in the car did not catch you, before."

"Why, Anna," he said, "I'm touched."

Anna came to stand beside him in the doorway. She said, "Hold your face still." She brought out a handkerchief, moistened it with her tongue, and rubbed one side of his mouth. "I will not be seen with a man who is covered with someone else's lipstick. Even at twenty to four in the morning. There."

She locked the door and they went quietly down to the street and the car together. He started up and asked her which way they should go, and she sat thinking for a moment. Then she said, "Kurfurstendamm. Who was she?"

"Who was who?"

"The girl you were kissing?"

"Someone you're lucky I found first."

They had been gone about five minutes when another car drew up at Number 17 and two men emerged from it and went into the house. They climbed the stairs to the fourth floor and after a short wait while they knocked and listened one of the men produced a small steel instrument and opened the door. Soon they came out and went downstairs again. They went through the passage by the stairs to a small room at the rear of the house, and when they left they had come to an arrangement with the old woman, Frau Grunewald.

9

THE TWO GERMAN troopers delivered the violinist from the Café Lorraine to 46, Augartenstrasse and Tom Coutts hurried him upstairs to the bare room where Amery and Miles were waiting. They sat him down on the other side of a table from Amery with a powerful light shining in his face, and he remembered what interrogation had once meant in Germany and his mouth twitched at the thought of the sinister implications of "questioning."

They let him wait while he sat looking from one to the other in an uneasy silence, from Amery to Miles to Coutts, his black eyes flickering, a pulse beating in the hollow temple at one side of his head.

Amery said softly at last, "Your name?"

"Riefenstahl," said the violinist, "Max Riefenstahl."

"Well, Riefenstahl," Amery said, "when you're ready, tell us just exactly what the Café Lorraine is for."

"What is it for, gentlemen?" Riefenstahl raised his hands palms upwards and looked about again, his smile at once tentative and fawning. "It is for entertainment, you know; drinks, music, and with every discretion, gentlemen, where one may find a little *Fraulein* if one wishes."

"We are not gentlemen," said Amery, "and we know you can get yourself a drink and a girl in every hole-in-the-ground in Berlin. We'd like you to go on from there."

"How is one to continue? I have my violin, I make music. What more can I tell you?"

"Riefenstahl," said Amery, "who owns the place?"

"A certain Herr Reinhardt. Kurt Reinhardt."

"And who else?"

"There is Frau Charlotte Dorfer. The Widow Dorfer."

"And who else?"

Riefenstahl shifted uneasily in his chair. He cast about and tried one ingratiating expression after another while they waited. Then he said, "Gentlemen, I assure you that my own interest is so little, one could scarcely say I was a part owner at all."

"According to my information," said Amery, "Reinhardt, the Widow Dorfer and you are equal partners."

"I am responsible for the music. Nothing more, I swear it, only the music."

"But you are an equal partner."

"Appearances might be so," cried Riefenstahl, and he seemed to shrink in his chair slightly, his head turning birdlike from one side to the other.

Amery said, "Riefenstahl, what else can be had from the Café Lorraine besides a drink and a girl?"

They watched him assume an air of innocent bewilderment with an effort. He said, "I swear to you, I do not know what you mean. I have already said all that I can."

Amery thought that behind the cringing there was a flicker of hatred and fear. He said, "Do you recall any of these names? Liebeldt, Schweik, Frankel? Gruenther? Remer?"

"As names . . . perhaps. But they are not among my acquaintance."

"Possibly no longer. Let's take Frankel. A few months ago Frankel was kidnapped and rushed across the border into the Soviet Zone. He had spent an hour in your Café Lorraine and he was seized only twenty meters from the Lichtenstrasse entrance. Then there was Schweik. Schweik was followed from your cellar and shot down not far away by three men who went straight back where they'd come from, the M. V. D. building at Muhlendamm. And then there was Gerta Remer: are you sure you don't remember her?"

"The name means nothing to me!"

"She was a pretty girl, she used to wear her hair in braids. She was working down there with the other girls and she was kidnapped right out of the place by two men in our uniforms. She's vanished completely, but we hear that her father has stopped refusing to work for them at Peenemunde."

"We all know what happens in Berlin, gentlemen—it is a daily occurrence."

Amery said, "It is indeed, but it's happened rather too often to people who have just left the Café Lorraine. We've been waiting for the right time to bring the subject up. We think the time is now."

Riefenstahl said unsteadily, "It is all a mistake, a terrible mistake. My sympathies are with the West, with the Americans—"

Miles laughed shortly and Amery said, "The kidnapping of people from one side of Berlin to the other looks like a simple business, but it's not simple at all. It's work for experts, and many of their experts we know. So they can't stay long on our side of the city, they have to make their raids and get out again quickly. They need people here to let them know when their victims are available, where they can be found, and when. It's occurred to us that you might be one of those people, and your Café Lorraine might be one of the dens where word's passed across the border for them to come and get their man. They need places like yours, Riefenstahl, and they shift around, but we think we can just about nominate you."

Riefenstahl said with agitation, "It is not so! *Heilige Maria Mutte Gottes,* it is not so!"

Amery was staring at the blunt scarred ends of his fingers where the nails had been torn out. He said, "We use very little violence up here. In cases like yours we have a different technique. What we thought of doing with you was to deport you back into their zone. You came from there once and you could be sent back. But the thing is, Riefenstahl, that once you were there we'd let it be known that you'd changed your political stripe, you were in East Berlin working for us. Does that appeal to you at all?"

"To an innocent man!" cried Riefenstahl. "You would do this to an innocent man."

"Unless you decide where your future lies," said Amery pleasantly, "we'll do it within 24 hours. Come on, Max! You'd sell your own mother for a new G-string for your fiddle, why worry about betraying a mere friend?"

Riefenstahl began to say something and Amery snatched him by the front of his shirt.

"How's it done, Riefenstahl? Come on, let's have it!—who's your runner?"

Riefenstahl twisted his head about and Amery wrenched him up and half out of his chair. "Who is he?" he said. "The fellow with the cough? He was in Krummstrasse, is he your man?"

Riefenstahl gasped, "Yes, yes, that is the man."

"Who is he?"

"His name is Johann Keipert."

Amery thrust him back into the chair and went round the table.

He said, "Begin at the beginning, Riefenstahl, and bear in mind that we know a good deal already and we're checking on you as you go. First, where do we find this Keipert?"

Riefenstahl said, "He lives in the basement of Corneliusstrasse, 28."

Amery said to no one in particular, "Get that, Briggs?" and a voice replied from a small grating in the wall, "Yes, sir."

Amery said to the grating, "Make your move and don't stand about, we're waiting for him." He turned back to Riefenstahl. "Keipert left the Café Lorraine tonight a few minutes before eleven o'clock. He waited till a man called Keen came out with a girl, and he was in Krummstrasse again later when the same man appeared there to keep an appointment. So if you want to live, Riefenstahl, you'll tell us what you know about Keipert, and why he's interested in our Herr Keen."

Riefenstahl said, "I will be permitted to remain in West Berlin?"

"If we think you're worth keeping here."

Riefenstahl leaned forward and laid both hands flat on the table. "You wish to know about Keipert," he said. "Well then, I will tell you."

Once he had begun there was nothing and no one he was not willing, even anxious, to betray. He was talking steadily when the telephone at Amery's elbow rang sharply and interrupted his recital.

The time was seven minutes to four.

10

ANNA CAME out of the Kurfurstendamm coffee stall where she had been telephoning and crossed to the Volkswagen at the curb.

Keen said, "Did you talk to him?"

"Yes."

"Where now on the guided tour?"

"We are to be waiting at the *Untergrundbahn* at Steinplatz, 30 minutes from now."

"Who's going to be there this time, Anna? Chummy Richter, or another reception of thugs?"

"Otto will be there!"

When they came to the entrance of the Steinplatz subway he drove past slowly, and after going the length of the block returned to pass it again. The entrance was brightly lit; the street was empty. He drew up a few yards short of the UNTERGRUND sign and switched off the motor.

"Sit still for a minute and watch," he said. "We've time in hand."

After a short while there was the faintest suggestion of a rumble from a train deep below, and half a minute later three or four people emerged from the underground and disappeared one way and another into the dark.

Keen said, "Is he coming by the subway, or is this just a place to meet him?"

"I don't know." Anna's tone said that it was something she hadn't thought of.

"Well if he does come by train, which direction will he arrive from?"

Anna thought for a moment. "He will be coming from the direction of Wittenburg, a train going west."

"Right, out we get. We're going down below."

They went together into the *Bahnhof* and down the ramps, stairs, and tunnels to the westbound platform. It had only two other occupants besides themselves; a beshawled old woman huddled on one of its benches, and a man nearby wearing a workman's cap and carrying a lunch pail. Keen paused by a finely printed timetable among the posters on the underground wall. He found the right column of figures and looked at his watch. If Richter was coming by the subway he would arrive on time; there was a train from Anstalter and Wittenburg at 0419 hours.

Keen said, "We've six more minutes."

At 17 minutes past four two men appeared on the platform, and with less than a minute still to go three or four more early risers came through the tunnel and stood waiting. When he heard the clatter of the approaching train Keen took up a position near the tunnel entrance. The train rattled and roared into the station. Five or six passengers stepped out and those who had been waiting climbed aboard. The train's doors slammed shut, its motors whined, and it began to move and accelerated on its way. The platform emptied; they were left standing by the tunnel alone.

Keen said, "No Richter."

"But he said twenty minutes, and he could not come from the opposite direction."

"Then I guess he's up above waiting at the car. But hang on there for half a minute."

Keen returned quickly to the timetable to study the schedules, and hurried back to Anna.

She said, "What were you looking for?"

"If Richter's using the *Untergrundbahn* this morning he's going to be at least half an hour late."

"Does it matter?"

"Look," he said, "I don't want us to be kept here, I don't want anyone to arrange for us to be waiting around."

He took her arm and they went through the tunnel to the stairs and the ramp. At street level he told her to wait by the change booth while he went out to the sidewalk. He cast a rapid glance up and down; the car was empty and there was no one in sight. He beckoned Anna and as she came forward he said, "Get into the car, we'll drive round and round the block till he shows up."

As he spoke, he heard steps coming quickly up the ramp from the platform below. He led Anna out into the street and stood back close against the wall. The steps came up into the entrance and hurried past the change booth towards them. The man came out and stood on the pavement, looking to the Volkswagen and then turning his head to scan the street. It was Richter, with his long heavy raincoat almost sweeping the ground.

Anna said, "Otto," and he swung round swiftly.

"Ah," he said, "I am late, the trains are never on time."

Keen reached down for Anna's hand and as she began to say, "But Otto—" he squeezed her fingers hard and said, "Let's not make ourselves any later, Richter. Where do we go from here?"

Richter said, "You will drive. Go first to the car."

Keen took the wheel and Anna and Richter climbed in behind. Richter reached a hand over Keen's shoulder and said, "If you are armed, you will be so kind."

Keen said, "Nothing doing. I've needed it once tonight already."

"You will do as I say. The pistol."

Keen sighed. He pulled out the Luger and handed it back, and Richter said, "Turn and drive the way you came, I will direct you as we go."

They went south till they crossed Kurfurstendamm again. After five or six minutes they came to a huge pile of desolation that had once been the Nollendorf Theatre and Richter directed him south again into narrower streets and then a lane. At the end of the lane he was told to turn right; the lights shone into a closed alley with snow piled against a brick wall ahead.

He stopped with the front wheels crunching into the snow. There was a rectangular opening in the brickwork at the left-hand side, and from it steps led up along the wall of a house to a door.

Richter said, "No lights. Switch off and get out of the car."

Keen stepped out and Richter slammed the doors. He felt a pistol barrel pressed into the small of his back and Richter said, "You will go first. At the head of the steps you will go through the door. The room will be dark, and you will take three paces inside and stand still."

Keen led the way through the wall, up to the closed door, and into the darkened room. Richter and Anna followed him in and he heard the door shut behind them.

There was a movement in the dark and a voice said, "Stand him back against the wall." Richter's feet scraped, a hand groped and thrust roughly. And Keen thought, it was all right, they were ahead of the others; at last he was face to face with Mayerling.

11

BACK IN THE room at 46, Augartenstrasse, Amery put down the telephone, scribbled on a slip of paper, "Fellow with his throat cut in Krummstrasse identified," and held the slip out to Christopher Miles and Coutts. Miles nodded and passed it on, and Amery said to Riefenstahl, "Get on with it."

The most delicate factor in the murders and kidnapping operations based on the Café Lorraine, Riefenstahl continued, was timing. In the past his instructions had come from a man in East Berlin whom he had never seen and knew only as Ulrich. A number of methods were used to lure the victim to Lichtenstrasse, the most successful of which generally involved a girl. Once there, Riefenstahl's part was done and the next moves were up to Keipert. A channel had been set up for Keipert and it was his function to pass the word to the kidnappers or assassins waiting across the border. He was also to keep watch on the café entrance from Lichtenstrasse until the operation was complete; and in cases where the victim could not be held there and left before Ulrich's men arrived, it was Keipert's responsibility to shadow him, work at which he was highly skilled. But Keipert's cough was rapidly bringing his usefulness to an end, and there had been indications that before long he would suffer an unfortunate accident and someone else would be found to take his place.

Riefenstahl had first heard of Major Keen that night. Ulrich had sent word that he would come to the Café Lorraine and give his name to the waiter soon after nine o'clock. He would be met there and he would probably leave at once. Careful watch was to be kept on him while he was waiting and it was to be determined if he was alone; and when he left he was to be followed by Keipert. Riefenstahl had made an attempt to get more details from Ulrich and had been told to carry out his instructions and ask no questions.

And that was his complete account of the affair as he knew it, up to the time of Keen's arrival in Lichtenstrasse.

Amery said, "What about the person who met Keen and left with him. Was Ulrich curious to know who it was?"

"My instructions," said Riefenstahl, "concerned only Herr Keen."

Amery said, "So we have you who sets the snares, Keipert who brings on the hunters, and the hatchet men from the M. V. D. . . . Riefenstahl, you keep odd company."

He pressed a buzzer beneath the surface of the table. A moment later the door opened and a sergeant in uniform stood waiting.

Amery said, "Take this man down to the basement and put him in a cell alone."

Riefenstahl said in consternation, "What do you do with me? You said I would be permitted to leave."

"We'll see about that, when it's too late for you to communicate with your chum Ulrich across the border."

"Why should I? What could I tell Ulrich now?"

"For one thing, you could tell him to get after Keipert."

Amery nodded to the door and the sergeant came in, took Riefenstahl firmly by the arm, and led him out of the room. His protesting voice died away along the corridor.

After a while Miles said as if to himself, "They knew it was going to be a fellow called Keen. They knew where he would be waiting last night, and when. They knew about the Krummstrasse appointment as soon as it was made, and they had a gunman there first."

Amery said, "Lovely conclusion, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Miles. "We are having the finger put on us from inside."

Coutts said, "The bloody lines must be tapped."

"I can tell you for definite, Tom," said Amery, "they're not."

Coutts said, "But after we left for Krummstrasse there were only about 20 minutes to go, and only four of you left who could have given the appointment away."

Miles said, "Five. Fraulein Ronda von Heidlitz had 20 minutes too."

Amery said sharply, "You can forget about her."

"Someone was still waiting for Keen," said Miles, "twenty-five minutes after the appointment was made right out of the blue."

Coutts said, "And they also knew that he was going to be at the Café Lorraine. Suppose Mayerling didn't make that Krummstrasse appointment at all, what if it was just to get Major Keen there and do him in?"

Amery said impatiently, "A man was killed in that cellar, Tom. What the hell was he, just a prop to give the place atmosphere?" He turned to Miles. "Where's Colonel Hone?"

"As far as I know, still with our people talking to Washington."

"It's beginning to look," said Amery, "as though Charlton Browning was right. They're

pressing us too hard, we can't have Mayerling running loose any longer."

"If you don't mind me making the suggestion," Miles said, "how about finding your leak and plugging it up?"

Amery said, "I wish it were so simple."

He reached out a hand for the telephone and, with his fingers an inch away from it, it rang. He listened for a moment; then he glanced up and said, "It's our man Briggs whom I sent to pick up Keipert, calling from the patrol car." He listened again, nodded, made monosyllables. Then he said, "Right!" and slammed the receiver down.

He stood up and came quickly round the table. "We're going to Corneliusstrasse," he said. "I'll tell you as we go."

Miles said, "They've got Keipert?"

Amery said, "They've got him. But not to talk to."

When they arrived at the roofless three-storied house at 28, Corneliusstrasse a trooper was waiting to take them down to Briggs in the basement below. Keipert had lived in a single cellar room under the bare beams that supported the ground floor of the house above. They crowded in and Briggs and his men stood back to let them see what they had found.

Amery looked and said, "So they didn't need Riefenstahl to tell them we'd soon have Keipert. And they decided he'd been coughing long enough."

One of the men brushed against the body as he crossed the room and it swung gently from side to side, the feet a few inches from the floor. Keipert had been hanged from one of his own cellar beams, and suicide was out of the question because his hands were tied behind his back with a length of the same cord that had strangled him.

12

KEEN STOOD against the wall in the darkness of the house at the end of the alley. The hand on his chest thrust again. His head snapped back against the wall as he stumbled and he restrained the impulse to lash out at Richter in the dark. There was a faint click and he was dazzled by the beam of a flashlight lying on a table in the middle of the room. He could see Richter to one side and Anna by the door; the man sitting behind the flashlight was a dark shape in the shadow.

The flashlight was adjusted slightly to shine directly into his eyes. He put up a hand to shade them and the voice said in almost unaccented English, "Your hands down, do you mind? So you are Keen, we meet at last. I am Mayerling."

Keen squinted into the glare. The voice said from the shadow, "I would like to hear what you have to say about the murder of my confederate Hermann in Krummstrasse."

Keen said, "I call it good reason to cut out the small talk and get down to Foreman's journals."

A hand came into sight beside the flashlight with a book of matches and then another with a pack of cigarettes.

Mayerling blew smoke into the beam of the light and said, "I can understand your anxiety to hear my terms, but the events in the cellar have a certain interest for me."

Keen said, "I should think they would. They had a certain interest for me, too. But we've taken no more steps to trace you. I'm here alone."

"I am aware of that."

"There were no patrols at Krummstrasse."

"Only two friends of yours waiting in Opernplatz."

Keen said, "If you know so much you must know about the shooting as well. The man who killed Hermann, whatever his name was, took a crack at me, too; so draw your own conclusions."

"I already have. After the chase to Moabit I'm afraid we had to recognize that our Soviet police friends, the M. V. D., are in the hunt also. I think it possible that I made a mistake in Vienna."

"Mayerling," said Keen, "they're right behind you, all of you."

There was a smooth and pleasant chuckle from the dark. "It is good of you to warn us, Herr Keen. But of course, my welfare must be your first concern at Augartenstrasse."

Keen said, "You could do worse than make it your own."

"Believe me, it is."

"If they come much closer we're both losers. Or do you imagine the M. V. D. will bargain with you for the journals too?"

Mayerling blew more smoke and said, "You wish me to distinguish between the M. V. D. and British or American agents such as yourself?"

"Take what view you like," said Keen. "I'm here now, to negotiate for them."

"Would you still have negotiated, if the patrols had been able to follow you, and you had Otto in a cell at Augartenstrasse?"

Keen said, "We tried to find you, there's no argument about that. But not to put pressure on you, only to be certain the others didn't get hold of you first."

The tip of the cigarette glowed. "But at that time you had no reason to think the others even knew of my existence, much less the journals."

"We weren't taking any chances."

"Neither am I, now. In my communication to London I gave you fair warning. You chose to disregard it."

Keen reached out carefully, still watching Richter, and stood the flashlight on its base so that

it shone straight up to the ceiling. "Now," he said, "let's hear some sense about the journals."

Mayerling said, "You tempt us both almost too much. It would be a mistake to think we feel cordial towards you."

Keen said, "Shooting up here is the last thing you want. All you've lost is some face. Now name your terms."

Mayerling stared at him for a long moment. At last he said, "You can agree to them at once?"

"They must go to London and Washington. We want twelve hours."

"Twelve hours." Mayerling nodded his head slowly, his forehead furrowed in thought. He was wearing a leather greatcoat with a white silk muffler casually knotted at the neck. Keen found himself mildly astonished at his appearance. It was the sort of face you saw at St. Moritz or Klosters, and had seen protruding from the turrets of tanks at Courcelles; it was easy to picture him in ski trousers and sweater, with smoked glasses and poles making his jump turns on the slopes at Malthausen.

Mayerling said again, "Twelve hours. Yes, that is only to be expected. My price is high, I would like to show you a little more of what you are buying."

"The photostats in London gave us the general idea."

"But these extracts I have chosen with more care." Mayerling reached down to the floor beside him and came up with a battered briefcase. He opened it to bring out a number of typewritten sheets. "Here we are," he said. "Listen to this."

He began to read. It was a sinister accounting of instantaneous strikes, mega-tons of explosive, strategic envelopment, thermo-nuclear warheads, psychological disintegration; an outline of total, obliterating war. It was a summary of U. S. plans for the total destruction of the Soviet Union, detailed, merciless, and chilling.

As the recital went on it seemed to Keen that Mayerling was reading from the sheets with unction, as though he derived pleasure from the revelations of American iniquity. There was no concern for the appalling picture the journals projected, no dismay at the prospect of universal destruction or the slaughter of humanity by the tens of millions. And then Mayerling turned another page. It was intended, according to Admiral Foreman, to depopulate large areas of Russia by controlled and systematic starvation, leaving an uninhabited waste that could be exploited at leisure in the years to come. Keen thought, *exploited.* The maniacal ferocity of the plans set forth was not enough; *Foreman had recorded future intentions to exploit the areas laid waste.* A notion whose implications he couldn't fathom at that moment flashed into his mind and he stared across the table at Mayerling as though hypnotized, deaf to the continuing drone of his voice.

He went forward to the table again and leaned against it. Mayerling paused in his reading and looked up.

Keen said, "Mayerling, I've heard enough. I want those sheets to go to Augartenstrasse."

"By all means." Mayerling tapped the sheets on edge and held them out. "Take them now. What do you think they'd say to them in the Kremlin? The entire two volumes are all on the same delightful theme." He leaned back in his chair, with his hands clasped behind his head and the cigarette in his mouth.

"Never mind what they'd say in the Kremlin. How much do you want for them, now?"

Time went by. It might have been a minute; to Keen it seemed more like an hour. Then Mayerling said, "For the journals I will accept an amount equal to five million dollars in Swiss francs paid into the Swiss National Bank in Zurich, the draft to be made payable to Werner Hausmann. Are you clear on that?"

Keen said, "Five million dollars. You're practically giving the things away."

"You are right, I am. When I have received word from Zurich that the amount has been paid I require two more days. You will then be told where to find the journals."

"Suppose we make objections to the two days?"

"You will make no objections, unless you want them to go to Moscow, for nothing. I think the discussion is over."

Keen said, "It's not over yet."

"No?"

"There are people hunting for Anna. Someone was at the Café Lorraine in Lichtenstrasse. I don't know who, but it could have been the gunman from the Krummstrasse cellar."

Mayerling's eyes flickered and Richter's head turned quickly. There was a brief instant of frozen silence in the room. Then Mayerling said, "Take Anna with you now. Go down to the car and wait there."

Keen took a pace towards the door and turned back to the table. "Mayerling," he said with intensity, "take cover while you still can. The three of you. We can put you under armed guard and you can have safe-conduct anywhere."

"My friend," said Mayerling, "I have respect for the organization you represent. That's why I want my two days, to vanish, and I intend to have them." He stood up and came round the table. He seemed to be amused at a thought and laid a friendly hand on Keen's shoulder. "You know, we are on opposite sides of the fence, but in a way you and I are birds of a feather. And if I have to shoot you before our association comes to an end I hope you will bear me no ill will."

Keen said, "Do you think you might?"

"Who knows? . . . Would you like to go with Anna out to the car now?"

Keen said, "Richter has something of mine. I'd like it back."

Mayerling regarded him carefully. "Yes," he said, "with you one does not mind crossing swords. Otto, give him his pistol."

Richter pulled out the Luger and presented it butt first. Keen slipped it under his coat. He went to the door and Mayerling switched off the flashlight.

"Wiedersehen," Mayerling said, "till twelve hours from now."

Keen held the door for Anna and they went down the steps and through the wall to the car. They sat in the front seat together, waiting for Richter. It was close to five o'clock in the morning; there were still another three hours to dawn.

He put out a hand to draw back her hair and turn her face. "Where are you now, Anna?"

She said, "More than ever now, I am alone."

"They could have done it without you," he said. "Richter should be shot for bringing you into it at all."

"It was my own fault. But I am not in it any more." She reached round to take the hand on her shoulder. "This place of yours in Augartenstrasse. What will they do to me there?"

"Nothing."

"That is what you say, but I am afraid."

"You needn't be. I've been looking after you since you came down the steps in Lichtenstrasse. I can hardly stop now, can I?" He leaned forward and kissed her lightly and she returned the caress, her mouth soft and warm.

13

KEEN STARTED the Volkswagen's motor and switched on its lights. Richter climbed in and told him to return the way they had come, and he backed the car out of the alley. A short while later he drew up at the Steinplatz subway entrance. Richter put his head in the window to say, "If she tells you where I live, Herr Keen, pay no attention to it, I will not be there again. Look after her well." They watched him stride into the underground, his long coat flapping at his heels.

When they arrived at Augartenstrasse, Keen told Anna to wait in the car and ran into the building. He went to the switchboard on the ground floor and told its operator to get Tom Coutts down, on the double. A minute later Coutts came briskly down the stairs with the old duffel coat over his arm. Keen hurried him out to the car and they drove off in the direction of Charlottenburg.

Anna said, "Where are we going now?"

"You and Coutts are going back to your place for a few hours."

"He is to stay with me in my room?"

"Until I come to get you."

She turned to look at Coutts, leaning forward over the front seat with his head between them.

"It's all right, miss," said Coutts, "I won't bite."

Keen said, "Listen, Tom, this is the score." He talked rapidly and at the end Coutts said, "But wouldn't we all be better off at Augartenstrasse?"

"Until I've talked to Amery and Colonel Hone we're keeping Anna to ourselves."

The street in Charlottenburg was still empty when Keen drove its length and came back to number 17. They went into the house together. Keen took Anna's key and told them to wait while he went ahead up to the fourth floor, and a moment later they heard him call softly from the landing above. They went up and into her room.

Keen said to Anna, "Is there anyone but you on this floor?"

"No, there is only this one room."

"That makes it easy for you, Tom. Come out on to the landing." Coutts followed him out and they studied the angles of the short corridor and the steep narrow stairs. Keen said, "What do you think. Will you be all right alone?"

Coutts said, "From here I could hold off a platoon. No one gets near her unless they come down on the roof by parachute."

"Right. Hold on here a minute, will you?" Keen went into the room again to Anna. He said, "I'll try to get back for you within a couple of hours, but I've an idea we're in for some action and I might be longer."

She came to rest her forehead against his shoulder. "I wish—" she said, and stopped. And then, "Is this just because I would be useful to the others, or is some of it for me, Anna?"

"If it was just to keep the others away from you, you'd be at Augartenstrasse, behind bars."

"You should be saying, she is an unspeakable Berlin bitch who should be behind bars."

He lifted her head. "You've been keeping the wrong company," he said lightly. "But I wish you'd remember what I told you before."

"That they were two murderous madmen? I know that now."

"No. I told you not to care a damn about anyone in this affair but yourself."

"If I had as much sense as a—a tufted thrush. Well, whatever that is I have not as much sense. And I will care one of your damns."

He rumpled the top of her golden head. "Anna," he said, "your judgment is terrible. Take care of Coutts for me."

He turned and left her standing there and went quickly past Coutts and down the stairs to the street. As he went through the hall a door opened a crack at the end of the passage going to the rear of the house and the old woman, Frau Grunewald, stood listening for a moment, waiting for the sound of the Volkswagen. Presently she crept out of the passage and shuffled her way to the telephone on the wall at the foot of the stairs.

She dialed slowly with an ear cocked to the floors above, then she spoke in whispers, repeating

herself to make her message understood. She lowered the receiver carefully down on to its hook, and listened again for a sound from the fourth floor.

When Anna said that the old woman never slept it had not been strictly correct. She had been sleeping when Keen came into the house and went up to Anna's room, and she had opened her door only in time to see Anna going up the first flight with Coutts. She had seen a man come and seen a man go; she had made her telephone call in the belief that Anna was up under the roof alone.

When Keen drew up for the third time at the Steinplatz underground there were more people about than before. He made his way down to the westbound platform. He went first to one end and then the other, standing close to the wall at the platform's edge. He waited till a train came in, gauging the width of the gap between the walls of the subway tunnel and the succession of moving coaches. After the train had gone he went through more passages and ramps to the eastbound platform, and from there he explored the remaining exits and stairs. When he came up to the surface again he was sure of one thing: the only way in or out of the Steinplatz underground was the entrance where they had met Otto Richter.

He drove recklessly through the wakening streets back to 46, Augartenstrasse, marshaling his thoughts as he went. As he was getting out of the car he looked at his watch. It was 5:43.

14

THE SERGEANT on the switchboard said that Amery and Miles were in 216. Keen took the stairs two at a time to the corridor and the room that contained the maps, the bar cabinet, and the long table. He had had time to strip off his coat, tell them he had come from Mayerling, and slap the sheaf of typewritten papers on the table when the door opened and Charlton Browning strode in with the code man MacGregor at his heels.

Keen picked up the sheaf of papers and held them out. Browning said, "What's this?" Keen let him see for himself.

He said, "Mayerling?"

Keen said, "Pixies."

Browning glared, took the sheets, and sat up to the table in the nearest chair. He read rapidly in silence. When he had turned the last page he said quietly, "Good—Lord." He turned his head to Miles. "Why didn't someone of yours shoot Foreman ten years ago?"

Miles lifted one shoulder slightly and Browning stood up and looked at Keen.

"Well? Let's have it."

MacGregor flipped his pad open and stood with pencil poised.

Keen began with the bartender at the Café Lorraine and the girl Berta, and took them briefly step by step to Mayerling's demand for two days' grace and the price he was to be paid in Zurich. His account of the sequence of events was concise and, apart from notable omissions, complete.

Browning said to MacGregor, "Radio teletype to London, all of it, now."

MacGregor said, "Yes, sir," and took Mayerling's extracts and hurried out of the room.

Browning said, "Now. Where's the girl?"

Keen said, "She went with Richter. I left them at the underground."

Browning said, "Amery. Two men at her lodgings to bring her in if she shows up. What's her address?"

Keen glanced at the large-scale map of Berlin on the wall and read off the first street name he saw. "Seventeen, Ronnestrasse. In Wilmersdorf."

Browning said to Amery, "Tell your man to take one of the Opels and park a few doors from the house," and Amery gave his instructions into the telephone. He dropped the receiver back onto its cradle and said, "How soon can we expect to hear from London?"

Browning said, "In Whitehall they're gnawing their fingers—say three hours at the outside."

Keen said, "Mayerling's not moving again for twelve."

Browning said, "But we can get that money paid in Zurich."

Keen said, "We need Colonel Hone's immediate judgment on the papers I brought back from Mayerling. It's of tremendous importance. It could be the most vital thing in this whole affair."

"What are you talking about?"

"You've read them. Look. Is there any chance of holding up that payment in Zurich?"

Browning said, "None whatever. If we want the journals we can't pay his price quick enough." He turned to Amery. "I'm not staying here. If you have something to pass on, you know where I'll be."

Amery said, "Er—when are you hearing from her again?"

Browning glanced at Keen and Miles and back to Amery. "Can't say," he said. "Hold the fort."

When he had gone Amery said, "Browning doesn't know you, Keen, but I do. So let's not have repartee. Before we get on to Riefenstahl, what are you keeping to yourself?"

Keen said, "I've got the girl, and I've a lead to where Mayerling's hiding."

Amery pursed his lips in a silent whistle. He said after a moment, "And you held out on Browning. Why the girl?"

"She was never really in it. They only made use of her, and I'm not having her hammered at by Browning or anyone else."

Miles sat himself on the arm of a chair. He looked at Keen with a calculating eye and said,

"She must be quite a *Fraulein*. Eight hours ago you didn't even know her."

Keen said, "Listen to me, both of you. She got me to Mayerling after that Krummstrasse shooting. Then later she had an opportunity to put me in a difficult spot with Richter but she didn't open her mouth. So if there's any grilling to be done on her I'll do it myself."

Amery said, "That's all very fine and noble, but you've chosen a hell of a time. This lead you've got on Mayerling: did that come from her too?"

Keen said, "No." He went back to the wall map of Berlin. "Come over here," he said, "look at this." He located the Steinplatz underground and described how the train had come and gone, the platform had emptied, and then Richter had come up from the caverns below. "He wasn't on any train," he said, "but he came up out of the underground. Now look where we went." He traced the general direction they had taken from Steinplatz, his finger moving along a green line on the map. "Do you see what I'm getting at? We followed the subway back towards Wittenburg, it was more or less underneath us all the time."

Amery frowned at the map and Miles said slowly, "That would be a hideout indeed."

Keen said, "Richter came on foot along the subway tunnel itself."

Amery said, "Making a quick dash between trains?"

Keen said, "Standing flat against the wall and letting them go by. I've checked on it." He rubbed a hand over his forehead and lit a cigarette. He went to sit in one of the armchairs, wishing he could look up and see Tom Coutts leaning against the wall. He said, "Let's hear what you got out of Riefenstahl."

The room was silent again and the cigarette was almost down to the cork when Keen said, "Riefenstahl, Ulrich, Keipert, and Hermann. And they've been on to us from the beginning. Who did Hermann turn out to be?"

Amery said, "Hermann Lang, a fellow who was missing for three weeks, believed to have been run across the border."

"Mayerling said he thought he'd made a mistake in Vienna."

Amery said, "Maybe he did, but the termites were in before you left London. Someone of ours. Someone of Hone's. It's an inescapable conclusion. Everything possible is being done of course, and Hone and Browning are working on it, but you can't stop that sort of leak overnight." Keen said, "There's something bloody terrible going on and I can't put my finger on it. I can feel them watching us—that car that came from nowhere half way to Moabit, the fellow shooting from the cellar steps, Keipert hanged, someone stalking Anna. But none of it makes a vestige of sense."

Miles said, "Look, couldn't we get that stuff from MacGregor page by page?"

"He's sealed up in the code room," said Amery. "He won't be long."

Keen stood up and walked about the room. After a while Miles said, "We're being sold out by a traitor, that's open and shut, and he's probably right here among us in Berlin."

Keen said, "I've got an unholy inkling, but there's no future in going over it and over it. You have to read the stuff yourself and when you do it'll hit you like a slap in the face." He stared again at the map and turned suddenly to Amery. He said, "Ronda Natalie Bohlen von Heidlitz. Who is she?"

Amery flicked at his mustache and said, "Old boy, ask at the Embankment when you get back to London. Ronda is someone special and we don't spread her around. Least of all to people who might finish up on the conveyor belt with the M. V. D."

Keen said, "If you're looking at me—"

"I am," said Amery, "right at you, and I'll tell you this. Browning should be shot for bringing her here."

Keen said, "Crossbow," and as though on cue MacGregor opened the door and laid the papers on the table. He went out again without a word. Amery and Miles pulled chairs up to the table side by side. Amery collected the papers and they sat reading them with their heads together, Amery waiting for Miles to nod and laying the pages aside one by one. He turned the last, tapped the papers into a neat pile again, and sat staring at nothing. Miles stood up and wandered slowly around the table, rolling the knuckles of one hand into the palm of the other, his eyes narrowed, his teeth bared in a mirthless grin.

After a while he said, "I'm an American born and bred, fifth generation and proud of it. But that stuff." He paused. "Keen."

"What?"

"What's your unholy inkling? Think it might be true?"

"Not for an instant."

Miles said, "Admiral Foreman—I don't get it. I just don't *get* it."

Amery said, "What's holding up Colonel Hone?"

Miles said, "The photostats that were sent to Washington. He's waiting on word about them, he won't move till he gets it."

Keen said, "Handwriting experts?"

Miles said, "A battery of them."

Keen said, "Well, unless anyone has a different suggestion I want a shave, a shower, some rolls and a pot of coffee. Black and strong." He asked Amery, "Where did they put that bag of mine?"

"Up on the top floor, 413. You'll find everything you want in the closets, we fixed it for the odd occasion. I'll have your coffee and stuff sent up."

Keen went up the stairs and found room 413. When he came out of the shower he took a clean

shirt from his bag and dressed slowly. A sergeant came in with a steaming pot and a platter of ham and eggs. Later, Keen made the mistake of stretching out on one of the cots.

Then someone was shouting: "Come on, Keen, wake up! Wake up, man!"

He rolled off the cot and looked at his watch. He had been sleeping for five minutes. Miles said, "You should have brought the girl in here, fellow. We're wanted at Kantstrasse in Charlottenburg."

15

KEEN AND THE Volkswagen had gone and Kantstrasse had been silent again. Anna had come to the door and said softly that she was going to lie down, although she knew she would only toss and turn. Coutts was out on the landing, leaning over the banisters.

He moved a hand, telling her to be quiet—and listened intently again. She stood beside him.

The house creaked and rustled.

Anna whispered, "What is it?"

"I don't know, miss. Thought I heard someone creeping about."

"If you did it was only the old woman. She is always creeping about, she is an old old beetle who lives in the woodwork."

"Shhhh." There was a soft click from below. "There."

Anna said, "Her door."

Coutts looked at her and nodded. He seemed to be making up his mind about something. He said, "Why isn't the old duffer asleep like she ought to be? Chase me, Aunt Minnie, it's five o'clock in the morning."

He took her arm and they went in off the the landing. Anna shut the door and Coutts told her to switch off the light. He went to one of the windows to stare out and down to the street below. He tried the catch and opened and shut the window again. "Just making sure," he said. He pulled a chair over and sat so that he could keep watch on the street from above.

Anna moved about in the dark and then they were silent, and after a while the couch creaked and he heard her regular breathing. He said quietly, "You all right, miss?" There was no answer; Anna had fallen asleep.

He moved slowly in the chair, not wanting to wake her. He glanced at the luminous dial on his wrist and kept watch on the street. They knew she was there. They would come for her before dawn. Coutts was well aware that the faint click from below had not been the closing of a door. It had come up clearly; it had been the receiver of an old-fashioned wall telephone going down quietly on its hook. Coutts was waiting for them.

Anna slept peacefully, like a child. She was still sleeping nearly an hour later when the car rolled silently along the street with its motor off and its lights out. It stopped below and two men crossed the pavement to the house.

Coutts shook her shoulders and she woke with a start. She uttered a small cry and said in confusion, "Where am I? You should not have let me—"

He said, "Anna, get up. On your feet, that's it."

"How long—?" she began.

"Come wide awake. Are you?"

"Yes. What is it?"

"Visitors, but you mustn't be scared. You must keep your head like a good girl and you'll be all right."

"You are going to leave me."

"I'm going out to the corridor. I want you to lock your door and not open it to anyone. Got that?"

Her face shone pale in the light from the window. Coutts went to the door. "Lock it after me," he said. "Don't open it."

Her voice shook. "Please, don't let them."

He said, "Quiet now. Quiet as a mouse." He went out to the landing and the lock grated in the door.

He peered over the banisters. Nothing yet. He brought out his Luger and raised the gnarled knobs to pull back its action slightly, feeling with a fingertip for the round half-in and half-out of the breech. He let the action down and home again and pressed the little lever forward from "safe." Right. No misfires with your first shot, the one that counted. First Hermann; then Keipert; now they wanted Anna.

All right. Let them come.

He heard slow shuffling steps from below. He drew back into the darkness at the end of the corridor and pressed himself flat against the wall. The steps rested on the landing below; there was a wheezing sound. So they were sending the old woman up first. Her straggly gray head appeared level with the floor and she came up laboring from step to step. She shuffled witch-like across the landing to Anna's door, paused there with an ear to its panels, and knocked quietly.

The old woman knocked again. A head appeared at the foot of the banisters; there was a whispered word. The old woman knocked once more, and went to the banisters to whisper again to the man waiting on the stairs. He came up on to the landing, thin and quick-moving, in a soft black hat with the brim turned down and a short black coat. He beckoned to his companion below. The second man joined them. The old woman crept back to the door and said, "Fraulein Hoffmann."

They stood in a group, listening. Then the second man moved the old woman aside from the door. He brought a knife out of his pocket. His right hand made a tiny practiced movement and

its blade flicked out of the hilt. He laid it on the floor. He reached into another pocket for something that glinted and bent to the lock.

Coutts brought his Luger up to bear on the man at the door and said, "Hey, mate. Ambush."

For a fraction of a second they were a tableau and then the landing exploded into confused and instantaneous violence. The man at the lock reached into his coat and simultaneously drove one foot savagely against the door. As it burst open, Coutts fired once. The shot turned the man round and slammed him forward flat against the banisters. He hung there, threshing. The thin man in the black hat had an arm flung about the old woman's neck. He held her against him and opened fire on Coutts from behind her, his automatic pistol hammering from beneath her elbow. His first two shots went over Coutts's head as he threw himself forward on to the floor. The old woman screamed harshly and went on screaming, a dreadful volume of sound coming from her ancient, corded throat. She struggled frantically, throwing off the thin man's aim. Bullets lashed the confined space under the roof, tearing splinters and gouging plaster. Coutts snapped two quick shots at the thin man's shoulder and head, trying to clip him and still miss the old woman.

The thin man was an impossible target. He was dragging the old woman back from the landing. Her steady shrieking welled and tore at the walls. Coutts missed the thin man again as he sheltered behind her at the top of the stairs. He shifted his grip to her waist and scrambled with her down the first two or three narrow steps. Once on the stairs he threw her down to the landing below and jumped after her as Coutts ran swiftly along the corridor to the banisters.

The shrieks stopped abruptly. Coutts put his head over the banisters and the thin man fired up from below. The bullet grazed the top of his left ear and he took one more lightning shot as the thin man sprang for the next flight over the old woman crumpled on the landing beneath. There was a short agonized cry. The thin man disappeared and Coutts heard him stumbling and leaping down the stairs to the ground floor.

He rushed to Anna's room. She was pressed back against the wall by the door, her face chalk-white, her eyes blank and staring.

He charged through the room to the window. He flung it wide and leaned out over the roof with his head and shoulders over the coping and his right arm well out. He had a clear field to the car in the street below. The thin man came running awkwardly out of the house, clutching at his left elbow. Coutts took careful aim. The man below tore at the door of the car and Coutts fired once. He watched the thin man spin round and fall to the road by the car.

Coutts pulled himself in from the window and ran through the room to the landing. He took the stairs flight by flight, leaping down from one floor to the other like a chimpanzee, past half-open doors and staring faces. He went through the hall to the street and the car. The thin man was rolling himself from side to side, face down and moaning softly. Coutts came up with the Luger held out. He saw the man's pistol six feet away on the ground, and bent and turned him over.

"Where did I get you, cock? Should have been your leg." The man was bleeding profusely from a wound above the left elbow and another high in the right thigh. The leg was bent; the last shot had broken the bone.

Coutts said, "You murdering brutes. Got one of you alive." He stripped off his belt and looped it about the man's thigh. He tightened it and made a knot. "That'll hold you, mate. Don't want you to bleed to death yet, do we?"

He reached into the car and snatched its keys, then he ran into the house to the telephone on the wall. He asked for Keen and when Miles came on instead he gave him a rapid account of what had taken place. He slammed the telephone down, ran up the stairs again past the old woman and the man hanging on the banisters, and into Anna's room.

She was still standing against the wall. Coutts said, "Anna."

Her mouth trembled and she turned her head. "It is over?"

"Major Keen'll be here in five minutes. If you've got anything up here to drink, drink it, but don't look out your door."

She said, "No."

"Don't look out your door, not till we come up here and get you."

Coutts went out to the landing. The man hanging on the banisters was dead from the bullet that had torn completely through his throat and buried itself in the wall behind. His body had almost emptied itself of blood and it had dripped down on to the old woman on the landing below. Coutts went down and took her shoulders to lift her up against the wall. Her head fell back and flopped about loosely, and her eyes opened and the eyeballs rolled up almost out of sight. The thin man had broken her neck.

Coutts let her fall back and stood erect. There was blood on his hands. Then he felt his own blood running warm from the notch on his ear, and he stood away from the wall and went steadily down the stairs.

He was bending over the thin man again, adjusting the tourniquet on his leg, when the car from Augartenstrasse rushed round the corner and drew up on the opposite side. Keen and Miles leaped out and crossed the street.

Keen saw the blood on Coutts's face and said at once, "Let's have a look at you."

Coutts said, "It's all right, it's only a bit of skin."

Keen peered and said, "Near miss. What about this fellow?"

"He'll live."

Miles knelt beside the thin man and rearranged the tourniquet with expert fingers. "He'll do more than live. He's going to talk." He said to the man in German, "Who are you?"

The thin man stared at him with glazed eyes.

Miles said again, "What's your name, fellow?"

The thin man raised his head from the ground. He worked his mouth, said, *"Ami!"* and spat full in Miles's face. Miles stood up with an exclamation of disgust. He wiped his face and touched the thin man with his foot. "A filthy fanatic, eh? One of those."

Keen said, "He's probably got his orders and a head full of Marxist guff and nothing else, but we'd better hang on to him just the same." He bent over the thin man. "Spit at me and I'll smash your face in," he said, "bullets through you or not."

Keen said to Coutts, "Anna still upstairs?"

"Waiting."

Miles said that he'd get on the air and call people in, he would be up with them in a minute. He turned to the car and Keen led the way towards the house. A knot of people were clustered on the front steps and in the doorway and there were other groups up and down the street.

Keen shouted, *"Politzei!* Inside, all of you. Off the street and shut your doors!" The groups broke up and the watchers scuttled furtively out of sight in two's and three's, to emerge and stare muttering again when Coutts and Keen had gone up the stairs. Keen stepped carefully over the huddled body of the old woman and climbed to the shambles of the top floor.

They went in to Anna and closed the door. She looked at Keen without a word and he put an arm about her shoulders. "There's no time to think about it, Anna. Get your coat on again, we're leaving."

Coutts went round behind the curtain to put his face under the tap over the sink, and Anna came out belting her gray coat. When they were ready Keen hurried her out and down to the street. They met Miles coming across from their car.

16

THE STREET and the old houses whispered softly. The thin man lay very still. They had perhaps three minutes before the patrols arrived from Augartenstrasse.

Keen said, "Colonel Hone with Amery yet?"

Miles said, "No."

Anna was in the car, sitting back in a corner of the rear seat. Keen said, "They weren't going to take her to Muhlendamm or anywhere else. They came to kill her. We're running out of time."

Miles said, "If you're thinking along the same lines as I am, they'll hold off till that five millions is paid in Zurich."

"They didn't hold off with Anna."

Miles stared down at the ground, moving the toe of one foot about slowly. He said, "If you're right, this is the most fiendish business—"

Keen said with quiet intensity, "Since the last ten minutes I know I'm right. And after this, we can't wait for Hone any longer!"

Miles said, "Are you prepared to go ahead under your own steam?"

"It's a long shot and it shouldn't be up to me. But we can't wait!"

Coutts turned his head to face the end of the street. "Cars coming," he said. "What's it going to be?" Keen said, "Where do you stand, Christopher?"

Miles said lightly, "I'm taking no orders from Browning. Let's get out of here."

They left the thin man lying in the road.

Miles was accelerating hard for the corner out of Kantstrasse when a command car and a jeep swept bumper-to-tail into the street. The two vehicles were traveling fast and crowded with men. A head came out of the command car, an arm waved them down and someone shouted, and then they were past and away.

Miles drove swiftly through the stirring ruins in the direction of Steinplatz. They were halted on the red light at an intersection when he said over his shoulder to Keen in the back seat, "Anyone giving a thought to Fraulein Anna there? What are you going to do about her?"

The lights changed and Miles turned back to the front. They were within a few minutes of the Steinplatz underground before Keen decided unwillingly that Anna would have to stay with the car. She would drive slowly about the vicinity of Steinplatz, passing the *Bahnhof* entrance at regular intervals and watching for them as she went by. She was to give them a maximum of two hours; and if they had not appeared by then she was to drive to Augartenstrasse and give herself up to Amery.

Ten minutes later they were on the westbound platform of the underground.

At that hour of the morning the density of subway traffic was approaching its peak. Two trains came and went while they stood together close to the western end of the platform, waiting for their opportunity to slip down on to the tracks unobserved. Now they could hear a third rushing towards them in the tunnel.

Miles said, "Once the passengers get off the train and start crowding the exit ramp, they don't look back. This time I think we ought to go."

The train came in with a gust of cold dank air and a deafening clamor. Its doors slid open

and it disgorged its passengers and an equal number fought their way aboard. The doors hissed shut again; it drew out of the station. The knot of people forcing their way through the platform exit to the ramp began to shrink and when there were only a handful still in sight Miles said, "Over we go, fellow," and jumped nimbly down on to the tracks to run crouched below the platform level into the tunnel. Keen went next and Coutts brought up the rear. They paused for a moment in the tunnel's dark to listen. There was no outcry from the station behind them; the only sound was the hushed metallic murmur of the rails.

They made their way along the tracks in single file, Miles lighting the ground with short flickers from the flashlight he had brought from the car. They had gone about 200 yards when they heard the first train coming towards them from the slight curve in the tunnel ahead. Miles said above its mounting roar, "If Richter can do it, so can we," and they pressed themselves back flat against the wall. Keen saw it charging headlong forward. The roar grew to a screeching crescendo and the train swept past, inches from his nose. He had a fleeting glimpse of the motorman standing at the window of his cab and then the carriages were flicking past one by one. Then, after an age, the train suddenly became a dark shape receding at 40 miles an hour and the tunnel seemed strangely silent and peaceful.

Miles said, "Hell," and breathed out with a long sigh of relief. "Well, pal, you were right about the clearance."

Keen said, "Not as right as I'd like to be. Let's keep moving."

They went another 15 or 20 yards and discovered that Otto Richter might not have been subjecting himself to the ordeal of the passing trains. There was a small recess in the tunnel wall, a semi-circular bay, and across the tracks opposite was its pair. They hurried along the tunnel, to cover again the distance they had already come from the station platform before the arrival of the next train. The tracks were beginning to reverberate with its approach when they came to the second recess. They crowded in and waited for it to pass, congratulating themselves on what seemed to be a succession of the bays at regular intervals. Their assumption turned out to be correct; they covered nearly a mile in good order and then at the seventh bay Keen called a halt. They had come two-thirds of the way from Steinplatz already, he said, and it was time they started their search for a door of some sort leading from the subway tunnel.

From the seventh bay they went slowly, scanning the walls with care by the beam of Miles's flashlight and running the nerve-racking gauntlet of two more trains. They passed the eighth bay and the ninth, and then Miles, still in the lead, stopped by a concrete-lined depression in the wall that was rather deeper than those they had so far encountered.

Set within it was a large cast-iron box. It was painted green, with rounded corners and one of its faces supported on heavy twin hinges. Fat sheathed cables led into it on one side and a number of smaller conduits emerged at its base to snake away out of sight beside the tracks. It was obviously part of the electrical equipment of the subway.

They were about to move on along the tunnel when the rails began to hum and then came the familiar echoing roar, and they waited in safety for the passage of yet another train. The red light on its trailing coach flashed by and receded, and Miles switched on the flashlight again and stepped out into the tunnel.

"Okay, on we go."

Coutts was bending at the door of the transformer box. He said, "Just a minute; let's have the light in here again."

The flashlight beam showed that the transformer's heavy hinged door was retained by a wing-nut whose threaded bolt engaged in the two prongs of a cast-iron hasp.

Keen said, "What is it?"

"This ruddy nut," said Coutts. "I felt it when the train was going past." He pulled it back and forth to show that it was loose. "It's not done up at all. You could push the door open from inside."

Miles looked and said softly, "*And* it's been in use. Stand back, Tom. I've never seen inside a transformer before."

He shifted the flashlight to his left hand and hauled back on the wing-nut. The door swung smoothly open and they stared at the interior of the box. It was hollow and empty. Instead of the wirings and armatures the dummy cables had led them to expect, they were looking in through the entrance to a passage that sloped gently upwards and angled away to the right.

Miles pushed the door shut again. "So we found it," he said. "Now listen. I'm going in first."

Keen said, "Sorry, old boy. It won't do."

There was a pause and then Miles said with an edge in his voice, "What is this? You going for medals or something? Or don't you think I could handle it?"

Keen said, "You listen. Mayerling killed one of your fellows in Regensburg and you were there too. He must have seen you. They'll take one look at a man from Regensburg coming in through their underground entrance and they'll open up on you and run for it. They'll shoot first and think about it afterwards. You'll have to make a fight of it or let them cut you down as you stand, and the last thing we want down here is a fight till I've talked to Mayerling and maneuvered him into position for you and Coutts."

Miles said, "If they'd cut loose on me so smartly, why not you too?"

"Because I know him. And he knows me."

Keen paused and Miles stood silent. Then Miles said, "I hate it like hell, fella, but I guess you're right. Take the light. We'll give you exactly one minute, then we'll be right behind you. Ready to roll?"

Keen said, "Shut it after me in case there's a train for them to hear," and Miles pulled again on the door.

Keen stepped over the sill of the transformer box on his rubber soles. The door swung noiselessly shut behind him and he felt his way along the first 10 paces of the concrete passage in the dark, navigating with a hand on the wall. When he came to its oblique-angled corner he flicked the light on briefly. The passage led straight ahead as far as the flashlight beam carried, maintaining its slight rising slope. When his watch told him he had been in the passage for 60 seconds he flicked the light on for an instant again; about 50 yards farther on he saw a stout closed door. He went carefully the remaining distance and listened with an ear to the wood. Not a sound came from its other side. He felt for a knob; his hand came to a knocker-like ring at its left-hand edge. He turned the ring with infinite caution and pressed his finger-tips against the door.

It opened and he stood in the doorway in pitch darkness, listening for the sound of breathing. The silence was absolute. He reached slowly into his coat and brought out his pistol, and to his straining senses its rustle against the cloth sounded like the breaking of surf. He bent his knees to crouch near the floor. He held the flashlight high over his head with the thumb on its button, tensed himself, and switched on the light.

At first he saw only the tiers of bunks built in threes against the walls. And then he stood erect. He turned and shouted recklessly down the passage, and heard their shouts of reply. A moment later they came running. They stood beside him and stared numbly in the one-time air-raid shelter built for high dignitaries of the Third Reich.

It was a body. To the three men in the underground bunker it told a tale of terrible finality. The body was the corpse of Otto Richter and he had been shot to death by a burst of small-arms fire. He was riddled. He lay face up, sprawled in his long raincoat on one of the lower bunks against the wall, with his black patch still in place and his one eye open and sightless.

And Mayerling?

Mayerling was gone.

Coutts found a switch and an overhead light came on to flood the room and show them the signs of struggle.

Miles said in a whisper to the walls, "So they didn't wait—and they've got Mayerling."

They searched the bunker in silence.

There were drops of congealed blood on the spiral steps leading through the ceiling at the far end of the shelter. They followed them up till they came to a cellar with a ladder extending to a trapdoor in its roof. Coutts went up first and pushed it open. Gray morning light came in from the ruins above; they climbed up through the trap. They were at street level inside a gutted house. The top surface of the trapdoor had been camouflaged by a coating of cemented chunks of rubble. It was in a corner of four roofless walls and when down it was almost invisible.

They picked their way out to the street and Keen pointed to the stark pile of the Nollendorf Theatre not far away. Miles said, "How long is it since we went into the underground?"

Keen looked at his watch. "I make it two hours and twenty-five minutes."

"We're too late for Anna then."

Keen said, "She'll be at Augartenstrasse. She could hardly go anywhere else."

Miles said, "And from here, neither can we." He looked at Keen and tried to grin. "Fellow, I'm glad I don't have to face Browning and the others alone."

17

THEY WERE ALL there: Amery, Hone, Browning, and MacGregor, and three senior men in uniform Keen hadn't seen before. He stood at attention near one end of the long table and made his simple announcement: Richter was dead, and Mayerling had been seized and could be nowhere but the Soviet Zone of Berlin.

There was a stunned, appalled silence. Miles looked at Colonel Hone with a hopeless shrug, and then the only movement in the room was Tom Coutts taking off his duffel coat to throw it over a chair.

Browning said quietly, "I told you, Keen. I told you we should have gone after him at the outset. But you wouldn't have it."

Keen said, "Colonel Hone, what about the writing in those original photostats?"

Hone said, "You may as well hear the worst. Of seven experts, two say Foreman wrote them. One says he did not. Four say he could have."

"Have the five millions been paid in Zurich?"

Hone glanced at Amery. "Almost an hour ago."

Browning said, "With all respect, Hone, I don't think that matters much now." He moved closer to Keen and stared him straight in the eye. "Instead of going after Mayerling, you ran about taking care of your girl so we wouldn't have a chance to question her."

"I have not made her my girl," said Keen, "and there were good reasons for leaving her at Kantstrasse."

Browning said, "Now Mayerling's gone and so are the journals, and they'll bring us closer to war than anything that's happened since the Berlin Blockade. Not another Korea, not Indo-China. The real thing." He paused. "Now all that's left for us to do is pin down the traitor who's been giving us away."

He turned his back and moved slowly round the table.

Keen said, "There's still one thing you're not clear on."

Browning swung round to face him again. "What's that?"

Keen said clearly, "Who wrote the journals."

"Foreman wrote them!"

Keen turned to Colonel Hone. "Do you believe that, sir?"

Hone said, "No, I cannot believe it." He bit his words off one by one. "But after that dispatch from Washington we are forced to accept it as a fact, no matter how incredible."

Keen said, "Christopher Miles doesn't accept it, and neither do I. And I think I can show you that Admiral Foreman never even heard of what we've been calling his journals."

Browning said slowly, "What else do you know that we don't?"

Keen said, "I finally know what's been going on in Berlin, and I want a hearing because there still might be something we can do about it."

Nine pairs of eyes stared directly at Keen. Hone said, "I hope you know what you're talking about."

Keen said, "I do, and I want to make a start right at the beginning." He stripped off his coat and tossed it to Coutts, and Coutts laid it on the chair over his own.

Keen gathered his thoughts. Then he said, "From the first hour in this affair there were inconsistencies, but not of fact, only of feeling. My feeling. We based our course of action on four assumptions: that Foreman was, in fact, the author of the journals—that was the first. That Mayerling was in it for money, a deal could be made, and his threats to hand the journals to the Reds were real and reasonable because it was the only way he could protect himself. That the others were after Mayerling, Richter, and Anna to force the journals out of them by torture or any other means under the sun. And that when things started coming apart, we were being betrayed by a traitor among us.

"Those were our original assumptions, and there was no reason for us not to have faith in them. But then the inconsistencies began, in the house where I met Richter with the girl. Richter had a radio and he'd been listening to the patrols, but when Anna said, 'The patrols have lost him, let's get on with it,' Richter shouted her down. Here were two men with millions right in their grasp, but Richter preferred to prolong their appalling risks and delay a settlement, for little more than reasons of face.

"Well, it was nothing more than that, just a small thing that seemed to be odd. Then, ten minutes later, that car picked us up out near Plotzensee somewhere. The men in it must have known where we started from, the house with Richter. It must have been more than sheer luck that they just happened to meet our one significant Volkswagen, just at that particular time and place. So if they knew where we'd come from, why hadn't they moved in then and there? There was no answer, it was just something you couldn't explain. But when the chase got going it began to look even fishier. They simply didn't try hard enough. Their car was about four times as powerful as the Volkswagen. Anna managed fairly well but she's just another woman driver, and they only stayed behind us, they didn't make up ground or overtake. But after I dropped Anna off they still managed to stay just behind.

"Now then. If they could still hang on when I was going as hard as you can make a Volkswagen go, why didn't they overtake when Anna was driving a good deal slower? Do you get the idea?"

Heads nodded and Browning muttered yes, yes, for Keen to get on with it.

Keen said, "What it amounted to was this: if they were actually after Anna or me, they were just plain half-hearted about it. And that brings us to the cellar shooting.

"The man in the cellar had the two opening shots in good light, and he missed with both of them. He was a gunman. It didn't seem reasonable to think they'd send a man on a job like that who couldn't even handle his pistol, and I made a target at point-blank range a child couldn't have missed. It was the chase all over again; the threat but the threat only. I came out of that cellar with a vague idea but before long it was a conviction. The fellow was a crack shot putting them just close enough but no closer, and the question was, why? Well, I can tell you. Because it was never intended to knock me off down in that cellar."

Someone said, "You're still a long way from Foreman's journals."

Keen said, "I'm getting closer. The thing that came next, was Anna. She was able to let Richter know about the chase to Moabit, and the one thing Anna could do was tell the others where to find Richter. But when she told him that the others were in the hunt, that we'd been chased back from his appointment, what did Richter say? He said, go home alone and wait there. He told the girl to go home alone. She made them vulnerable; with Anna perched on the end of a limb, practically in plain sight, they left themselves wide out in the open, but they didn't give a damn. According to Richter's story to her, she couldn't be traced or found. Hell, all you had to do was ask

at the Café Lorraine. And Richter must have known it.

"Then there was Riefenstahl. Riefenstahl told us that Ulrich was not in the least concerned with the person who met me at the Café Lorraine. Ulrich didn't care two pins who it was, and that's when Mayerling and Richter began to take on a tinge of pink. If Ulrich had really been after Mayerling, he should have been interested in practically nothing else but the person who asked me for cointreau in Lichtenstrasse. There was his direct line to Mayerling. But all Ulrich told Riefenstahl to do was watch Keen. Why?"

Keen paused to look about from one to the other. Then he said, "When Mayerling read that typewritten horror-story that was supposed to be from Foreman's journal, it seemed to me that I knew. The journals were fine up to a point, they were just barely acceptable for what they seemed to be. But then I listened to Mayerling reading about systematic and controlled starvation, the calculated depopulation of vast areas so that they could be exploited—that was the word that got me, *exploited*—for United States benefit in the future. And after that every word of the things became utterly, impossibly false. For level-headed U. S. staff men to plan to *exploit* the results of their own holocaust after exterminating a population—that was too much to accept. It was bloody nonsense, and Foreman would have known it was nonsense. It seemed to me that asleep or awake, drunk or sober, sane or raving, no U. S. admiral could ever have taken such stuff seriously for one moment, much less put it down. So if Foreman simply could not have put it down, who did? There was only one answer. The people who have been screeching like demented owls to brand the U. S. as warmongers. Those journals came out of the Kremlin, that's where they came from. They couldn't possibly have come from anywhere else."

Browning said, "You're still not getting over the verdict on them from Washington. All right, suppose Foreman didn't write the stuff, there's still any amount unexplained."

Keen said, "All planted so we wouldn't see the wood for the trees. Mayerling had papers. He was trying to sell them. The others were after him even to the extent of killing one of his own men, so Mayerling couldn't conceivably be tied up with the others—isn't that how it looked? But just consider that handwriting experts can be wrong, and assume that someone in Moscow was behind the whole thing, including Mayerling. What becomes of our four original assumptions then, and what happens to all those inconsistencies? They fall into place like the tumblers in a lock. The fact of them knowing in advance every move we made, Richter postponing the meeting with Mayerling, the chase that wasn't a chase, the shooting in Krummstrasse, Mayerling knowing there were two men at Opernplatz. And Richter being so cagey about them not being traced but sending Anna back to Charlottenburg, and Ulrich not wanting to know who I met in Lichtenstrasse.

"Everything makes sense if Foreman's journals were originated by the Soviets. They knew exactly what we were doing because it was in response to them pulling the strings. Of course Richter didn't press on to Mayerling, they had nothing to sell and no intention of selling it. They didn't need half an hour to get a man to Krummstrasse, they made the arrangement themsevles. Richter sent Anna home because he was working for the others and he thought she was in no danger. And Ulrich was sublimely indifferent to whoever I met in the Café Lorraine because he wasn't hunting Mayerling, he was hand in glove with him."

One of the uniformed strangers said, "What was the chase for, and why did they kill the man Hermann?"

Keen said, "The chase was the perfect way of telling us that the others were in the hunt too. The chase and the shooting were to stir us up. They wanted a hornet's nest, they wanted us to lash out for Mayerling because they were documenting every step we took. Hermann was just a body, someone they wanted to get rid of and could use, and for me to find and be blamed for. For one reason and one reason only. To convince us that they really were after Mayerling because Hermann was waiting for me and was therefore one of Mayerling's men. And we went for it, hook, line, and our eyes of blue."

Browning said, "Keipert?"

"According to Riefenstahl, Keipert had just about had it, so when we were about to come after him, why leave him alive? He'd served his purpose, with his cough and his knowledge he'd become a nuisance. He was another one to scream on the propaganda machine that we killed for the Foreman journals, the same as we killed Hermann and the man Tom Coutts shot dead in Kantstrasse."

Browning said, "If you caught on to all this, why in Heaven's name didn't you go after Mayerling before?"

Keen said deliberately, "Because until the fight for Anna at Kantstrasse there was still one unaccountable fact that made nonsense of it all. *They were stalking the girl.* If Mayerling was their man, if the chain of reason was sound, I couldn't imagine what they wanted Anna for. They could only want her for what they could get out of her, so there had to be a hole in it somewhere. And with that hole, you couldn't gamble on the journals going to Moscow if you turned out to be completely, utterly wrong."

The room stirred and muttered in agreement. Keen said, "That's one reason the girl was taken back to Charlottenburg. We had to find out one way or another what they wanted her for. Well, the answer was a knife on the floor. Anna was the one thing they hadn't planned. Richter

brought her into it and the two thugs didn't come to kidnap her, they came to kill her. When you want to kidnap someone and take them away, you don't open a knife and lay it on the floor ready to use before you even open their door." He looked across at Coutts. "That what happened, Tom?"

Coutts said, "Yes, sir."

"So there it was. She was to be killed and there weren't any questions any more. Unless Mayerling and Richter were in on her attempted murder, they were being double-crossed by their bosses. They'd be the next to go, because the men behind it weren't leaving anyone alive to tell the truth about the Foreman journals. And that's when we set out for the Steinplatz underground, too late, with only one small detail remaining. How did that car pick us up on the way to Moabit?" Keen turned to Amery. "Could we have the girl up here for a minute?"

Amery looked at Browning. Browning nodded and Amery spoke into a telephone.

One of the uniformed strangers said, "They've never gone this far before. The Kremlin can invent anything it likes and put it in the propaganda mill and shout it to high heaven. They did it with the germ-war story in Korea, they could do it in Berlin with these journals. So why not just do it? Why the killings and the fantastic plot and the rest of it?"

Keen said, "To give the journals the ring of absolute truth. We thought we had a traitor among us. Mayerling was the traitor. We're the victims of a monstrous fraud, a master forger of incomparable skill, and the deadliest spy network in existence. The journals must have been compiled from every intelligence source at their command, but that wasn't enough. They set out to prove they were true and they've done it. We've done it for them. They made us admit that we actually believed in the journals. With the murders of Keipert and Hermann to hang on us they'll make the story bigger than life, of how we strained every nerve to recover the evidence of American war plans. And when we couldn't get them by force, we paid five millions dollars into the account of someone called Werner Hausmann in Zurich. Now they'll take those documents and get to work to strip the United States of every friend it has in the world. The warmongers are on the march and only the Soviets can save you, and if you don't believe it, listen to the Foreman journals. And if no one minds," said Gregory Keen, "I'm going to have a drink, because Brigadier Browning was right and I was wrong. We should have gone after Mayerling to begin with."

The door opened and a sergeant stood there with Anna. Browning said, "Bring her in," and Anna pulled away from the sergeant's hand on her arm and went quickly to stand beside Keen.

Keen said, "Anna, do you remember when you took me to Otto Richter? Richter told me to get out of the house, to wait for you outside at the car. Do you remember?"

She nodded.

"Well, while I was waiting and you were in the house with him alone, what did he tell you to do?"

She was confused and frightened. She said, "He told me to hurry. To go the shortest way, because he wanted the car."

"Which way was that?"

"By Westhaven to Bremerstrasse. He told me to be sure to take Bremerstrasse, no other, it was quickest." She paused and looked about the room from one graven face to another. She turned back to Keen as though pleading. "Bremerstrasse."

Keen said, "That's where the car picked us up, just where Richter told her to go."

Browning said, "That clinches it. Black and white. All right, Sergeant, take her downstairs."

The sergeant came into the room and steered Anna out to the corridor.

Keen said, "If that girl had given Richter one hint that I knew he'd come along the subway tunnel, I'd never have got away from them alive. I think that should make up for the fact that she was in it to begin with."

Colonel Hone said, "No one wants to bear down on the girl. But have we anything left? Or are we through, are we irrevocable losers? Richter was dead down in that bunker but Mayerling was not. Where does that put us?"

Keen said, "There was blood on the steps leading out of the bunker and there'd been a struggle. I don't think Mayerling went of his own accord."

Hone said, "If he was seized by force and went with them unwillingly, they must want him alive for some reason. And if he's alive, and we could find him, and get him out—would Mayerling come back if he could?"

Browning said, "But what use is Mayerling to us now, dead or alive?"

Hone said, "If Mayerling was double-crossed after he'd gone so far with them, he wouldn't be very well disposed to them now. In fact, he'd hate their Russian guts." He asked the room at large. "What would become of their manufactured truth about the Foreman journals, if we could get Mayerling and his story back from East Berlin?"

Keen thought, *We've fought a round in the Cold War and sustained a defeat, but the next round is coming up.*

Before long it would begin again. They would be calling for the good men and true.

He heard Colonel Hone say, "Amery, I think it should be explained now. Who and what is Fraulein Ronda Natalie Bohlen von Heidlitz?"

After a long silence, Amery told them.

Ronda von Heidlitz was the mistress of an M. V. D. officer named Dmitri Zukoyan with whom

she lived in an apartment near Stalinallee in East Berlin. Through Ronda they had trapped him; for five months they had owned him body and soul. He was a man who had intended to escape to the West and with Ronda's help and encouragement he had laid his plans. Her help had consisted of installing a tape recorder and its microphone in their apartment, and the spools of tape on which Zukoyan's treason was recorded in his own voice were now in Amery's keeping. They had threatened to deliver them to Zukoyan's chief in the M. V. D. at Muhlendamm. For five months he had been under Amery's orders, and the time had come for him to carry out his orders again.

Amery said to Colonel Hone, "That is what we have left, sir. They've got Mayerling. But we've got Dmitri Zukoyan."

18

RONDA CAME TO the border control at Brandenburger Tor looking like a thousand other Berlin women bundled up against the winter cold. She was dressed in an old black woolen coat and the *babushka,* the supremely unflattering scarf tied about the head and knotted under the chin. The Russian guards on one side and the American and British soldiers on the other glanced at her identity card, poked perfunctorily at her string bag of oddments, and waved her through.

She hurried across one bleak corner of the Tiergarten to the quarter along its southern edge. Half a mile from Tiergarten a black sedan cruised slowly past her in a quiet street and stopped a few yards ahead. She drew level and one of its rear doors opened as it began to move. She stepped in and slammed the door. It accelerated away and round the first corner.

Amery said, "Let's hear it quickly, is Mayerling alive?"

"Yes."

"Where is he?"

"They had him at Muhlendamm this morning early, for an hour."

"Where is he now?"

"On the top floor of a building on the edge of the canal, not far from Luisberg. He is under heavy guard. Someone is flying from Moscow today, to take him back early tomorrow morning."

"How early?"

"Zukoyan does not know. He may know later, but not before tonight. The operation has been controlled from Moscow—until Mayerling was brought in this morning Zukoyan knew nothing about it."

Ronda drew furiously on her cigarette, blowing smoke and inhaling immediately again. She was twisting about in the rear of the car to peer through the back window every hundred yards.

Amery said, "Is Mayerling all right?"

"Yes."

"We thought he might have been shot."

"One of the men who captured him was wounded."

Amery said, "This building—where is it exactly?"

"It was one of a row of warehouses but they have rebuilt the area, and—" Her voice rose. "Oh, I will have to show you on a map!"

Amery said, "Getting you down is it, Ronda?"

"Zukoyan is threatening to make a confession and then kill himself. Getting information out to me by day, it was too much. He swears he cannot go on—and neither can I! Do you hear me, I cannot go on! For five months I have lived with that man since you trapped him, and every minute of every day and night I listen for the tramp of feet!"

Amery said calmly, "You'll hang on for another 24 hours."

"Yes," she said. "You know I will. But it must be only once more." She lit a second cigarette from the first and dropped the stub to the floor of the car and twisted her foot on it.

"This building he is in," she said. "It is a prison, an annex to Muhlendamm. He is surrounded by men inside and out."

Amery said, "It's on the edge of the canal?"

"A mile inside their zone. Between Luisberg and Jannowitz Bridge, where the canal is part of the Spree. What you are trying to do is not possible. To get Mayerling away from them alive or dead, it is not possible."

He turned into the ramp and ran the car down to the underground garage.

Five minutes later they joined the group clustered round the large-scale map on the wall of the conference room. Ronda showed them the exact location of the building. She described what Zukoyan had been able to tell her about its interior and the situation of the room on the top floor where Mayerling was being held.

Keen finally said, "How does Zukoyan happen to know exactly where he is?"

They had taken Mayerling from Muhlendamm under escort, she said, and Zukoyan had been one of the officers of the guard. He had gone into the building and he had seen the sentries posted; two outside the door of the cell, others in the corridors and more on the stairs. There had been orders that only one or two high-ranking officers were to be admitted to his cell. He had been stripped and his clothes searched; they had even taken into account the possibility of his suicide.

Ronda said, "All of you! You must give up and accept it, you have lost Mayerling and there is nothing you can do."

"There's one thing," said Keen. "They haven't closed the border. We can go and have a look at this M. V. D. annex of theirs before they shut us out."

19

A FEW MINUTES after 2:30 in the afternoon they crossed the border on the *Hochsbahn,* the elevated railway. Two blue-uniformed troopers of the *Volkspolitzei,* the detested Vopos of East Berlin, looked at their dog-eared identity cards and spattered trousers and passed them by. Keen was wearing a peaked workman's cap and carrying a spirit-level; Miles had a paint-splotched old hat crammed on his head and a bag of plasterer's tools. They left the train and went through the barrier and more Vopos at Kopenicker, and marched together past a construction project towards the canal. There were Vopos at every corner and twice they were halted to show their cards. Soon they were out of the busier streets with the canal about 400 yards away through the ruins on their left. They stopped on a corner and fished cigarette butts out of their pockets.

Miles said, "About here somewhere?"

A trooper was watching them from the corner. "Not with that character watching us."

They smoked their butts and after a while the trooper lost interest in them and disappeared round his corner. Christopher Miles led the way quickly into the ruins and they scrambled through them till they estimated that they were within 300 yards of the canal and somewhere in line with the M. V. D. prison. They were surrounded on all sides by tall crumbling walls. Behind them they could hear the low murmur of traffic from the street they had left. They went through the remains of two more houses and came to one with the rafters of its second floor still in place.

Miles put his bag of tools on the ground and climbed up first. He worked his way to an empty second-floor window. It looked out over a desolate waste to the canal.

Keen said quietly from below, "How's the view?"

Miles looked down grinning.

"The view is fine."

"Are we in the right spot?"

"Couldn't have done it better. Up you come."

Keen opened the tool bag and brought out binoculars wrapped in a piece of canvas. He said, "Got a firm grip up there?"

Miles let go with one hand and tested his hold with the other. "Let's have them."

Keen tossed up the binoculars and Miles caught them neatly. He was peering intently at the third building from the left in a row of five on the other side of the canal when Keen climbed up to join him. He inched his way along the rafter.

Miles lowered the binoculars and passed them to Keen. "Interesting," he said. "A problem, but interesting."

Keen studied the building. The lenses brought it, stern and forbidding, to an apparent distance of only 20 or 30 yards. It was of five floors, six if you counted its gables. It stood on the canal's very edge, one high blank wall going down into the water itself. The sides of the roof sloped steeply away from the top of the walls to a flat surface crowned with three or four chimney-pots. Above the wall, in one sloping side of the roof, were set four small barred windows. Mayerling, according to Zukoyan, was in the cell behind the second from the right.

Keen left the window and ranged slowly up from the water's edge to the roof, scanning the featureless wall. It was of dark gray brick, as smooth and blank as the face of a dam. There were no windows below the level of the roof, no irregularities, no projections. Unless you were a fly it was unclimbable.

Keen returned the binoculars to Miles. "Got a picture of it?"

Miles said, "Two minutes more. I want to have a look at the ground between here and the canal."

"What do you think?"

"Fellow, it looks rugged to me. Maybe if we knew more about Zukoyan . . ."

Keen climbed down first. Miles took one last look across the canal and slipped the strap of the binoculars over his head. He bent to the rafters, took his grip, and let himself swing down. He hung for a moment and dropped nimbly to the ground.

They picked their way back through the ruins. Seventeen minutes later they were back across the border. Their reconnaissance had taken a little more than two hours.

Before they arrived at Augartenstrasse again Christopher Miles and Keen had agreed that with the right timing, and the right equipment, and the right weapons, and resolution, there was just one way it might be done. If they were ready to lose a life or two including their own, and they could count on Zukoyan, it might just be possible to retrieve Mayerling from East Berlin.

It was tonight or never.

Keen described the properties and dimensions of the building while Miles drew a rough sketch and it passed from hand to hand.

Keen said, "The essence of the thing depends on the two facts that the building is on the edge of the canal so we can approach it, and there are chimney-pots on the roof above Mayerling's window."

Colonel Hone looked up from the sketch and said, "You say this blank wall's eighty feet high. What are you going to use to get up there, a balloon?"

Keen said, "No, a couple of hundred feet of nylon line. It'll have to have a breaking strain of not less than a hundred pounds."

Miles said, "I thought of parachute cord."

Hone said, "No one alive can climb thin line or parachute cord either."

Keen said, "We didn't think of climbing it, sir. We were going to give it to Ronda for Zukoyan."

Amery said, "Old boy, I don't think you and Miles have a feather to fly with, but let's hear it anyway."

Ronda said in her stilted accent, "We can not rely on Zukoyan, and I think that whoever goes across the border for Mayerling tonight will be throwing his life away."

Amery said, "Let's not have speculation. Let's know what you two think you're going to do tonight."

Keen said, "Here we go. For tonight we want the two hundred feet of cord. We want the same length of knotted manila rope, and one Mae West for a float. We want three Russian or Vopo uniforms for Miles, Coutts, and me, some grenades, and two Sten guns with plenty of magazines. And we want three sticky bombs."

Miles said, "What the hell's a sticky bomb?"

Keen said, "You'll see. We want Ronda to take the nylon cord and deliver it to Zukoyan. Zukoyan has to get up on the roof of that M. V. D. building by a certain time tonight and loop the cord round the chimneypot so that both its ends hang down into the water of the canal. He's one of their officers and he knows the building. With his future at stake he'll have to find a way of doing it."

Amery said, "Very well—Zukoyan loops the cord round the chimney. What then?"

Keen said, "One of us will stay down on the bank with a Sten gun and the grenades to hold off the opposition if we're heard or seen. The other two will swim the canal to the ends of the cord hanging from the roof. We'll float the rope and the other Sten gun across on the Mae West. We'll tie one end of the cord to the rope, and pull on the other, and that'll take the rope right up and round the chimney and down to the water again. With the knotted rope round the chimney it'll be no problem to get up the wall. Where the roof rises from the top of the wall there's a ledge running right round the building. How wide, Christopher?"

Miles said, "Not less than one foot, not more than two."

"Once we're up there we'll have a good foothold, we won't have to work while we're hanging on the rope. The two who go up to the roof will take the sticky bombs and the other Sten. We'll slam the sticky bombs on the wall at the base of Mayerling's window and we'll have four seconds to get out of the way. Those are going to be the worst four seconds of the night but they're something we have to accept. When they've gone off, one of us will go through the hole first with the Sten gun to hold the door in case there's any delay getting Mayerling out." Keen turned to Ronda. "Do you happen to know if they tied him up?"

"I do not think so."

"If not, so much the better. Mayerling will go straight down the rope and we'll follow. Then of course we have to cover that distance to the border and get across it."

Browning had been listening carefully. He said, "Well, Amery will find you the uniforms. The rest of the stuff I'll get on to for you now. You'll have it within an hour."

Keen said, "So we go."

"That's right," said Browning, "you go." He looked at Miles. "You understand, I'm giving orders only to Coutts and Major Keen."

Miles looked at him without troubling to answer, and after a moment Browning said, "Of course, I should have known. Good man." He turned back to Keen. "Is there anything else?"

Keen said, "Yes. Cyanide capsules." Browning stared him in the eye and nodded.

20

KEEN TOLD THE man on duty in the passage to open her door. Anna was sitting on the lower of the two bunks in the cell. She uttered a little cry as he came in and jumped to her feet and pressed herself against him.

He took her up to the room on the top floor with the bathroom and the two Army cots. Most of her make-up was gone and she looked younger than her 24 years. She took a cigarette and Keen stood looking out the window. He told her they were going across the border that night and she stood with her mouth against his cheek.

"But you will come back."

"That's it, I can't make any promises. But if it goes well I think we can get you out of Germany tomorrow."

She said, "You must come back. Not just to take me away from Berlin—"

He said, "It's only fair to tell you, Anna. I took you back to your house in Charlottenburg hoping they'd come after you. Do you understand that? They had to be brought out into the open where we could see what they wanted you for. You were the bait."

She said simply, "I know that. And I do not care. When you leave me again, how long will I have to wait?"

He said, "It might be a long time."

"Are you afraid, or do you shrug and pretend to me too?"

He said, "Anna, I'm scared stiff."

"How long can you stay with me now?"

"Long enough for you to wish the three of us luck." He put his hands on her slim waist. "Goodby, pretty one."

She flung her arms round his neck and kissed him fiercely.

Keen left her alone and returned downstairs to the conference room. Amery already had the uniforms, one a Russian officer's, two the blue serge of the *Volkspolitzei*. Coutts was trying on one of the Vopo tunics.

Amery held up the Russian trousers. "You talk the language, so these are yours," he said to Keen. "Hope you can get into the boots; we haven't too many sizes."

Keen said to Miles, "That makes you the other Vopo."

After a while Browning reappeared with two sergeants in tow. They were laden with a brace of Sten guns and one carried a canvas bag. Browning reached into the bag and brought out a hank of fine thin dark-blue line. He said, "Seventy meters of it. Parachute cord."

Amery went to the door. "I'll bring Ronda down. There's nothing to hold her up now, she can go."

He went out and Browning emptied the canvas bag on the table. "There you are," he said. "Three hundred rounds in five clips each for the Stens. Three grenades apiece. Your Mae West. And your three sticky bombs."

Miles came to the table to peer and poke at one of the bombs. "What's sticky about them?"

Keen had one of the jackboots on and was struggling with the second. "If I can get this bloody boot on," he said, "I'll show you."

Keen, Miles, and Tom Coutts were buttoned and belted into their uniforms when Amery came in with Ronda. She had the black woolen coat on again and the scarf tied round her head. Browning gave her the hank of line. "For Zukoyan," he said, and she buried it deep in her string bag.

Browning said, "It has to be done before midnight. You can tell Zukoyan that after that, he's off the hook, he can cross the border any time he likes and we'll give him asylum."

"I will tell my Dmitri Zukoyan," she said. "That is all?"

Amery said, "When you've seen Zukoyan you're to come straight back out again. Tomorrow will be too late."

She said, "You think I will stay a moment longer than I have to?"

She turned from the door with Amery. "I will do my best with Zukoyan, gentlemen. *Auf Wiedersehen.*"

When they had gone Miles stood looking up at the ceiling. "Funny, isn't it?" he said. "You never know where you'll find it, that steel nerve."

Keen said, "I could do with some of hers right now." He went to the table for one of the sticky bombs. "Want to see how these work now?"

Miles said, "So long as you don't set the thing off."

Keen held up the bomb. It was a metal ball the size of a large grapefruit with a black bakelite handle. He said, "Used against tanks, Christopher, before your fellows came to light with the bazooka. Never very effective because they were like putting salt on a bird's tail—you had to walk up to the tank and shove your sticky bomb on personally."

Miles said, "Good clean fun."

Keen said, "What happens is this: The outside metal is only a cover. Inside there's a slightly smaller ball made of thin glass and packed with plastic high explosive. The glass itself is coated with glue, hence the name, and the metal cover is only so you can handle the things without getting glue all over you."

He explained how the glass broke, the plastic flattened itself, and the glue held the bomb fast to whatever it was you wanted to blow a hole in; then he showed Miles how to pull the pins and explained the working of the four-second fuse.

Miles said, "And we're going to set three of them off against Mayerling's window, eighty feet up in the air. Where do we go in those four seconds?"

"The only place we can go, round the roof corner on the ledge."

Browning said, "You'd better get Mayerling down on the cell floor before you set your explosives."

Keen said, "If we can attract his attention without bringing the guards in through the door. But we'll have to keep it quiet."

Browning thought for a while. "Well," he said, "God knows how you're going to get on."

Keen said, "The more I think about it the better it sounds."

Browning said, "I'm more concerned with what happens after you get him away from the building. You're going to strike your heavy weather on the way home."

Miles said, "It's less than two miles, and we had a good look at some of it this afternoon."

Browning stepped forward to the table. He reached into his pocket to bring out a little pillbox. He opened it and tipped three small capsules on to the table. They rolled a few inches and lay there, tiny cylinders of transparent plastic filled with a pale yellow liquid.

"One each," said Browning. "See you keep them handy."

Keen said, "If it comes to the worst it'll be a pleasure to have them. Ask David Amery."

Browning said, "Well, that seems to be the lot. As soon as we've seen Amery again you'd better get going."

Miles indicated the bombs and grenades on the table. "How do we carry this stuff—in the bag?"

Keen said, "We'll keep out one of the guns. It won't look too odd, some of the Vopos go about with sub-machine guns."

Miles started packing the bag. "Oh, to be in Vienna," he said. "That's a town I know."

Browning looked at his watch. "Amery's tak-

ing a hell of a long time," he said, "but you want to know that Ronda's through the control before you go. Anything you still have to do before he gets here?"

Keen said, "Yes, take a long last look at the map, and have a drink." He glanced at Miles and Coutts. "What about you two?"

The clock said nearly nine before Amery returned. He marched in briskly and said, "She's through." He kept his coat on and went to hold his hands over the electric heater. His face was pink from the cold. "I watched her past Tiergarten and past the control. But there's something going on."

Browning said quickly, "How's that?"

"They're out in force tonight. They've about twenty men on their side at Brandenburger Tor and they're grilling everyone who goes through. Ronda was all right with her card from Zukoyan, but I saw them turn a lot back. I don't like it." He went to the map. "Show me again exactly where you're going to cross."

Keen pointed to the area just north of the *Hochsbahn*. "We weren't far from it this afternoon. The actual border runs down a long street with ruins on either side. All we have to do is get across it unseen."

Amery nodded and frowned at the map.

Keen said, "It's not the shortest way, but they've cleared their border swathe on both sides of these three blocks and we don't want to be caught dodging about in the open."

Amery said, "That's about what it amounts to. Shove your caps on and let's have a look at you." He moved round them one by one. "They wear the holster a bit farther round to the front," he said to Keen, and Keen adjusted his belt.

Amery said, "If no one looks too closely, you'll pass." He turned to Browning. "Any last words?" Browning shook his head and Amery said, "Well, I have. Something you probably know but you must remember, all three of you. If they manage to grab one of you the first thing they'll do is cut your buttons off and look for your cyanide pill. So whatever you do, get it in your mouth if you're in trouble."

They nodded, and Amery said, "Right. Someone lead the way. The car's at the bottom of the ramp."

Browning raised a hand in farewell and wished them good hunting, and they trooped towards the door. Miles was out in the corridor with Keen at his heels when one of the telephones jangled sharply. Browning said, "Hold it a minute," and picked it up. His face froze as he listened. They heard the voice at the other end speaking rapidly and then Browning put down the receiver.

He looked at the group in the doorway. "I have news for you," he said. "They've closed the border."

No one spoke for a long moment. Then Christopher Miles said harshly, "So what? We get through them tonight or we never get another chance. Border open or border shut, let's go!"

21

AMERY DROVE them to a deserted street and pulled the car into a vacant lot with its lights off. They climbed out into the rubble. Amery pointed and said that the border was only a hundred yards away, in a line from them straight through the ruins. He would wait there till dawn the next morning. If they were not back by then there would be no future in hanging on any longer, and he would have an early morning drink with Charlton Browning to remember them by.

He shook hands with them one by one and watched them melt out of sight through the walls.

They followed Miles slowly and in silence towards the border street. Coutts was carrying the canvas bag; Miles had one of the Sten guns slung from his shoulder. With 10 yards to go they came to the interior of a gutted house and Miles crept to its window.

At first there was nothing to be seen in the dark. Then they heard slow measured steps. A soldier passed within two feet of them and continued along the street for another 20 or 30 paces. They heard low voices; the steps turned and came back. They waited till the sentry completed his patrol again, timing the frequency of his beat.

"We'll watch him up and down again," Keen said. He went to the empty doorway to peer into the street. The sentry was out of sight at the extreme end of his beat, and his companion was going away from them in the opposite direction. There was only the faint sound of their footfalls.

Keen came in from the doorway. "They're leaving a big gap," he said. "We're in the middle, so it can be done. We'll shoot across one by one."

They waited for their moment and slipped out of the house and across the street at intervals of about a minute. They were swift slinking shadows disappearing into the houses on the far side. They waited while the sentries came together once more across the street. There were mutterings again; then they carried on with their patrol.

Miles said, "Do they call this closing a border? You could drive sheep across it."

They went on through more empty houses to the next street and the next, and then they heard voices again and Keen went ahead to reconnoiter. Directly outside, in the third street from the border, stood a Russian jeep with an officer speaking on its radio and another man standing at the curb. He was armed with a sub-machine gun of the familiar Red Army pattern, with the perforated cylinder enclosing the barrel. Fifty yards away on a corner stood a third man, another sentry.

Keen listened intently to the officer on the radio and then crept back through the rubble. They crouched down together. Keen told them about the jeep. "The skipper's a company commander, he's making the rounds of his sentry posts and reporting in to his colonel. They're not M. V. D., they're troops, and by the sound of it they're all over the place."

Miles said, "So that's why it was so easy. I thought once we were across we'd have plain sailing."

Keen said, "Far from it."

"What's it going to be, round them or past them?"

"We can't get round them if they're everywhere. Feel like grasping a nettle?"

Miles said, "We'd better grasp something, it's time for a bright idea."

Keen said, "Listen." He gave them a quick outline. A few minutes later Tom Coutts started working his way through the walls towards the sentry 50 yards away along the street while Christopher Miles was going silently in the opposite direction. Keen crawled back to his position overlooking the jeep and the street. The officer had finished his report on the radio; he was leaning against the jeep, taking time out for a cigarette.

After a while there were footsteps. The officer and the tommy-gunner straightened up and stared into the gloom, facing away from the sentry on the far corner of the block. They saw the tall figure approaching and the officer gestured to his gunner. He brought his sub-machine gun round and called in German, "Halt!"

Miles stood in his Vopo uniform. He shouted hoarsely, *"Volkspolitzei!* Waldemar Schmidt, returning from duty at Eisenbahn!"

Fifty yards away the sentry on the corner turned to the shouts. He peered along the street to the jeep and Coutts came through an empty doorway behind him and leaped on his back. He throttled him with a forearm and dragged him swiftly into the ruins; one minute the sentry was there, the next he had vanished.

The officer at the jeep told Miles to come forward and he stepped out briskly, asking if they wanted to see his identification. They recognized the uniform and the man with the tommy-gun lowered its muzzle to the ground. Miles stepped in front of the officer and unbuttoned the flap of his breast pocket as though to bring out his papers. The officer put his cigarette in his mouth and extended a perfunctory hand. The next thing they knew Keen was behind them with the barrel of his Sten rammed into the tommy-gunner's back. He snarled softly, "Not a sound," as Miles swung neatly and efficiently on the officer and knocked him cold. Keen brought up the Sten and hammered its butt into the base of the tommy-gunner's skull. The gunner pitched forward against the jeep and lay still.

They dragged the two men into the ruins and tied them securely with their equipment belts and the strap of their tommy-gun. They gagged them with material ripped from their clothes and tied with more straps, and then pulled them farther in away from the street. They were almost finished when Coutts came running silently from the corner.

"Good bag?"

Miles said, "How to get yourself a Russki jeep in one easy minute." He patted the unconscious officer and stood up. "That'll hold you, pal. When you wake up you can start thinking about an alibi."

They took their canvas bag out to the jeep and Coutts slipped in behind the wheel. Keen said, "Hang on a minute." He studied the controls of the radio and pulled some switches in and out. The set began to hum and Keen said, "That's it. We're receiving."

Voices chattered from the radio as Coutts drove quietly away in the general direction of the canal. They passed sentries at every corner and once another jeep. Coutts made a left-hand turn into a street blocked with rubble and had to back out again. A sentry stared hard at the jeep as it turned and then saluted when he caught sight of Keen sitting beside the driver.

Miles said from the rear, "What's all that on the air?"

Keen said, "Fellows calling in to say all clear, nothing to report."

The streets were dark. They passed two men patrolling and another group farther along. Miles said, "The place is swarming with them."

Coutts tried another left turn. This time the way ahead was clear. They cruised unchallenged past more and more troops at regular intervals. The jeep was a magic carpet with its red star and the unit insignia blazoned on its flanks. Then when they had gone about three-quarters of a mile from the border the streets were suddenly deserted again.

Miles said, "That makes sense. They've got a belt of them right along the border, in depth."

Keen said, "And it looks as though we're through it." He told Coutts to carry on a short distance more and then put the lights out. Coutts slowed to a crawl with the jeep's motor idling, and they bumped their way from street to street in almost complete darkness. About a hundred yards from the canal they stopped and Keen went ahead on foot to see where they were. The radio kept up its intermittent chattering.

Keen was back in five minutes. "This will do us," he said, "just about here. Look for somewhere to get the jeep out of sight."

Coutts pulled up and worked the shift to put the jeep into four-wheel drive. He climbed out to poke about in the rubble for a minute. He came back and backed it down into a crater, up the other side, and through a gap behind a low shattered wall. He switched off the motor.

Miles dumped the canvas bag out of the jeep and slung one of the Sten guns. He asked Coutts, "Do you want the other Sten yet?"

Keen said, "Quiet a minute." He was listening intently to the radio. It rasped and gabbled; then it uttered some staccato squawks and he reached for the switch and flicked it off.

Miles said, "Good or bad?"

Keen said, "Jeep commanders or area commanders, I'm not sure which, have to report in person somewhere or other at 23:30 hours. It was pretty colloquial, I couldn't catch it all."

Miles said, "So, soon after 11:30, when he doesn't show up, they'll start looking for Ivan back there. How long does it give us?" He held up his watch. "Thirty-five minutes."

Keen said, "And Zukoyan's deadline is midnight. Something tells me we're going to be pressed for time."

Miles said, "Zukoyan had better have that line hanging from the chimney."

They went past the jeep and felt their way towards the canal as quietly as they could, stumbling over heaps of old bricks, through tall weeds, and down into more craters. It took them seven or eight minutes to cover the last short distance, and then they came to the bank of the canal with the prison building towering up from its other side 25 yards away.

Coutts opened the bag and brought out the second Sten gun, the grenades, the rope, and the Mae West. He said to Keen, "I'm leaving the sticky-bombs in the bag, they can go on your belt."

Keen sat on the ground and pulled off the jackboots. He stripped off his tunic, loosened his belt, and ran it through the loops of the bag. He stood up in his socks. It was bitterly cold. Coutts inflated the Mae West and arranged the coils of rope around it.

Keen said, "All set?"

Miles was also barefooted and stripped to his trousers and shirt. He laid his Sten gun with the rope on the Mae West. He said, "No sense in us both getting wet till we have to. I'm going across to see how Ronda got on with Zukoyan."

He slipped down into the water without waiting for them to answer, and they heard him gasp. He choked for breath for a moment and then slid away smoothly. Almost at once his head disappeared in the blackness of the canal.

They waited. Keen tried to control the chattering of his teeth. The seconds stretched into minutes. There were the faint sounds of vehicles on the other side of the canal, from the street in front of the building. They strained their eyes across the water. Then they heard the swirling and Miles's head came into view and he reached up an arm to clutch at the bank.

"Come on," he said. "It's there."

Keen went down into the water and for a minute he was paralyzed with the shock. Miles said, "It's all right once you're in. Let's have the Mae West."

Coutts knelt on the bank and lowered the float. The Sten gun was just above the surface. Coutts said, "Whatever happens, I'll keep you covered while you're up there. But get out of the way of those bombs."

Miles said, "Good for you, soldier. Hold your ground."

They pushed away from the bank and struck out for the foot of the wall, with Miles towing the Mae West. The water was scummy; there was oil on its surface, and Keen felt unknown things brushing his face. The weight of the three sticky bombs in their bag dragged him down and he had to swim hard. He heard Miles whisper, "This way a bit," and his hand touched the slimy surface of the wall. He let his legs sink and felt them extending down deep into the canal.

Miles had the two ends of the cord. He worked deftly in the dark, tying the cord and the rope end securely. Then he said, "Haul away," and Keen pulled on the free end of the cord. It went up smoothly, taking the rope with it. When the rope end came to the chimney the first of the knots caught on something high above and he had to tug at it three or four times to get it free. Then the rope was sliding round the chimney and coming down the other side again. A minute more and they had their double length of rope hanging down from the roof. Miles took the two ends and tied them together. Keen let his weight hang from the rope for a moment. It stretched a little and held firm. They were ready for the climb to Mayerling's window.

Keen said, "When I'm on the ledge I'll pull on the rope once," and Miles said, "Be right behind you."

Keen went up the rope. He came to the top of the wall and hauled himself silently up and over with his heart pounding and a leaden dull ache in his arms. The ledge was wider than either of them had thought when they studied the building through their binoculars. He leaned back against the steep roof between two of the windows. It was working out like an exercise; their luck was holding, it was going according to plan. He reached down for the rope and gave it a tug.

He felt it strain in his fingers and soon he heard the faint whispers and rustlings of Miles coming up hand over hand. He moved over nearer the window to give him room on the ledge, and Miles came up with the Sten gun slanted across his back.

They took a minute to get their breathing under control and then they sidled along the ledge to the second window from the right. Keen went the last two feet an inch at a time, quiet in his wet socks as a nocturnal animal. He bent to the level of its sill and listened with an ear against the bars. He wanted Mayerling to be awake. The room beyond the bars was black and silent.

Then there was a faint rustle of movement, of cloth against cloth, or a bare foot sliding on stone. Something slightly less dark than the night came to the window and a face raised itself six inches from Keen's.

Keen breathed out, "Mayerling."

Two hands came up and gripped the bars, and his voice whispered, "I do not believe it."

"Are they outside your door?"

"Yes."

"Listen." Their voices were the rustle of leaves. "Get down on the floor, under your bunk if you've got one. We're going to blow your wall out."

"How soon?"

"Less than a minute. Six feet away from the window, on *your* right, there's a rope. As soon as the bombs go, come out and slide down it to the canal."

"I still do not believe it."

"Get down on the floor."

Keen put out a hand to touch Miles and they moved slightly to their left so that they stood one on each side of the window. Keen reached into his bag for the first sticky bomb. He brought it out and pulled its upper pin. The cover sprang apart. He pulled it off and stuffed it back into the bag. He felt again for Miles's arm.

Miles took the bomb and Keen whispered, "Pull out the bottom pin but don't let go the handle."

He prepared the second bomb. "On three, we slam them on together below the bottom corners of the window. Right?"

"Right."

Keen counted. "One . . . Two . . . *Three!*"

They smashed the bombs against the brickwork. The glue-covered bulbs struck with simultaneous soft thuds. They let go the handles and slid on the ledge as fast as they could move past the right-hand window for the corner of the building.

Keen was counting in his head, "One chimpanzee, two chimpanzees, three chimpanzees . . ." At "four" they were round the corner. At "chimpanzees" the top of the building seemed to rock with the shattering explosion of the two bombs.

Now the need for quiet was over. Miles unslung his Sten gun and shuffled rapidly round the corner and back along the ledge. Where Mayerling's window had been there was now a gaping hole. Mayerling was half in and half out on the ledge, standing dazed. Miles shouted, "Move! The rope!" He hauled Mayerling through the hole and thrust him on along the ledge.

Keen went past him to where Mayerling was feeling about vaguely for the rope. The door to the cell was opening. A glow of light came out through the hole and Miles shouted, "Hurry it up!"

Mayerling couldn't find the rope and Keen ran his hands back and forth on the brickwork. He found a tattered rope end and realized with a sickening shock that the operation was no longer going according to plan. The explosion had cut the rope—there was no way down from the ledge.

He shouted, "Rope's gone!" But his words were lost in the stammer of the Sten gun as Miles fired a burst into the cell. He shouted again and this time Miles heard him.

"The rope has to be there!" Miles shouted.

"It's cut, I tell you!"

"*Then dive for it!*"

Keen stood for perhaps two seconds staring down at the empty dark chasm below. They were 80 feet up. How deep was the canal? He felt his skin crawling with fear.

Miles fired another long burst at the half-open door of the cell and bellowed at the end of it, "Throw him off and dive for it yourself! We can't wait!"

Keen shut his eyes and pressed back against the bricks. Then the shout came up from below: "Get down from there!"

He opened his eyes and said calmly to Mayerling, "Dive, or be pushed?"

Mayerling shrugged, poised himself, and dived neatly off the ledge. Keen felt for its edge with his toes. He saw Miles out of the corner of his eye coming away from the window. Keen raised his arms, filled his lungs, and went out and down.

He hit the water at a slight angle and went down and down and buried his face in the ooze at the bottom of the canal. He fought his way up to the surface and struck out for the bank. Tom Coutts was hauling Mayerling out of the water and Miles was swimming behind him. Coutts gave him a hand and heaved him up. He turned on the bank to help Miles. Coutts picked up the second Sten gun and they stumbled and half ran in a group for the jeep.

Coutts said as they went, "Fifteen seconds from the bombs to when you hit the water."

Keen said, "Fifteen seconds? It was a year."

They hurried the rest of the way to the jeep in silence. Keen thrust Mayerling into the rear seat and they threw themselves in after him. Coutts started up and went carefully out of the rubble without lights. Keen switched on the radio as Coutts went round the first corner and headed straight for the border.

22

After about half a mile Coutts switched on his lights and speeded up. Miles and Keen were acutely cold and uncomfortable in their wet clothes.

After a while Mayerling said, "My friends,

you have put me in your debt, you have my undying gratitude."

Miles snarled at him, "No one here's a friend of yours, Kraut! Get down as low as you can and keep quiet." He said to Coutts, "Give me the other Sten, mine's in the canal."

Keen felt about on the floor of the front seat and passed it back. Miles said, "That's all we can do, isn't it? Make a run for it and shoot our way through if we have to?"

The radio was crackling and voices began to come in. Keen listened and said, "My watch is gone, what's the time?"

Miles said, "Thirty-six after eleven."

Keen said, "They're calling in a jeep that doesn't answer. That's us."

Miles said, "Can we make it before they put two and two together?"

The street they were in ended at a cross-street ahead. Coutts skidded round a corner to the right and another to the left to continue in the same direction.

The radio went silent for a moment and then a new voice barked a single word again and again with a note of strident urgency. Keen said, "Here it comes, any minute now."

The voice on the radio rattled something off and at the end the single word was repeated.

Miles said, "What are they saying?"

Keen said, "Vigilance, vigilance. Watch for a group of armed men believed to be heading for the British sector."

Miles said, "How right they are."

Keen said, "We'll be coming to them any minute but this jeep could still get us through unless they find the fellows we grabbed it from."

Miles slipped some Sten clips into his belt and set himself to fire from the back of the jeep. They were coming to the area infested with troops and at the next intersection they passed the first sentry. The radio started up and again Keen translated its message: they were calling the officer who had not reported at 23:30 hours. He must give his position and report in at once, at once.

They swept past two more troopers on a corner and some more in the middle of the block.

Miles said, "Keep it up, Tom, we're half way now."

Keen said, "And keep our powder dry, we're getting right into the middle of them."

Their lights showed a jeep and a group of men blocking an intersection ahead. Coutts braked hard and swung into a narrow street going at right angles. At the next corner he turned left once more, past more sentries and clusters of soldiers. The two corners after that were empty and Keen began to think that if their luck held, they might be going to pull it off; the impossible feat of driving straight from the canal to the border after bombing the M. V. D. prison, on the strength of a jeep with a star on it.

And then the blow fell.

The radio voice barked its introductory call for attention. Then, after it had run through the first part of its message, Keen said, "Run for cover, Tom, quickly! First empty street, get us into the ruins!" The radio was rasping steadily.

Miles said, "What is it?"

Keen said, "All jeeps to pull in to the curb and the crews to dismount. They're to open fire and stop any jeep that moves." He listened again. "We're Anglo-American agents. They want us alive."

Miles said, "I guess they finally found Ivan."

Coutts slowed down, flicked out the lights, and turned into a narrow street running midway through the block. It was little more than an alley. He passed two empty lots and when he had gone most of its length he stopped to back the jeep over the curb and through a gap barely wide enough to receive it. He jumped out. "Won't be a jiffy," he said, and went quickly out to the street.

Miles said, "We nearly made it. Just a couple of minutes more."

Mayerling spoke up again. "Now what do we do," he said, "sit here and wait for them to come and find us?"

Miles said, "Nothing would give me more pleasure than to put a bullet into you, Mayerling. I told you before, don't talk."

Keen was still concentrating on the radio. "This gets better and better," he said. "They just quoted our number, and they want immediate reports on all observed jeep movements coming from the canal towards the border."

Miles said, "Where did they see us last? Two blocks back, half a block over."

"It might be an idea to get out of here if we can. Ten minutes from now they'll start closing in."

They heard crunching steps and Coutts came in from the pavement. "There are blokes half way along the block in the next street," he said, "and we only got here in time—there's a bunch of them on the corner we just passed."

Miles said, "Troopers to the right of us, troopers to the left of us. How about straight ahead?"

Coutts said, "Hang on a minute and I'll tell you." He went through the wall behind the jeep and they heard him picking his way carefully towards the fourth street bounding the block they were in.

Keen said, "Mayerling, in case I don't get another chance, what were you really in it for?"

Mayerling said, "I made a bargain with them. Whatever you paid was to be mine. And as soon as it was paid my association with them was to come to an end."

"To make bargains with them you must have been available."

"These days, Herr Keen, it pays to have connections on both sides of the curtain."

Keen said, "I'd have thought you were the last type on earth to work for the others."

"Of course, that is what you were intended to think. Why do you imagine they approached me instead of a known Party man?"

Keen said, "I suppose they told you why they killed Richter and not you?"

"They could not wait to tell me, it appealed to whatever passes in them for humor. Instead of disappearing with the money from Zurich I was to be forced to broadcast for them from Moscow."

"On the subject of the Foreman journals?"

"Naturally, and of your efforts to retrieve them. It was to be the final evidence of their existence and truth." There was a pause and then Mayerling said, "In many ways they were a masterpiece. I suppose you know who wrote them."

"Who?"

"A traitor of yours now in Moscow. He was once in your British Foreign Office."

Keen said, "But who were the men who conceived the whole thing? Tell me that."

"It is very strange," said Mayerling. "They have no names and no faces. They were your real enemy, they watched you hour by hour. But who or what or where they are? No one knows."

There were steps in the rubble again and a moment later Coutts came through the wall and round the jeep. He said, "Surrounded on three sides that we know of, Major, and the other side goes back to the canal. Where now?"

Keen said, "How many in front?"

"Half a dozen up and down the street."

Keen said, "Well, we can sit here till they trace the jeep and bottle us up. Or we can fight our way as far as we can and then make a stand. What's it going to be?"

Coutts said, "That's no question. We go for them."

Miles went from the jeep to the gap in the wall where they had entered. He said, "Quiet, there. Listen."

There were faint sounds from behind them, from the center and both sides.

Miles said, "Here they come, spread out in a line to beat through the ruins. And not so very far away."

Coutts said, "That makes up our minds for us. Let's give them a fight they'll remember us by."

Miles came back to the jeep. "That's not what we came over here for, Tom. We came over to get Mayerling out alive, because we've got to have him."

Coutts said, "Yes, Mr. Miles, but stick your head out in any direction and see for yourself. Why fool ourselves?"

Miles said in a curiously distant tone, "Three of you would have a good chance if one of us drew them off."

Keen said, "How?"

Miles said, "The jeep. Take it out of here without lights and go bald-headed till they start shooting, then crash it through a wall and let them come. They wouldn't get a good look, they'd take it for granted we were all aboard, and they'd think the hunt was over."

Keen said gently, "Who's after medals now, Christopher?"

Miles said, "I'd like the Sten gun and some of the grenades. Ten minutes after I crash the jeep there won't be a man between here and the border. They'll come like flies."

Keen said, "Now look—"

"Save it," said Miles. "It's not a brand new idea, I've had it since we came in here."

Keen said, "We're well armed. If we do everything possible—hell, it's only five hundred yards!"

Miles said, "There's a battalion of them, it might as well be five hundred miles. We wouldn't get one block. Would we?"

"I hate to say it, but no. We wouldn't."

Miles said, "Not going to be difficult, are you?"

There was nothing to be gained by discussion or heroics and each of them understood it. Keen stood shivering in silence with the cold of his wet clothes and Miles's inevitable rightness soaking into his bones and his heart. Coutts unclipped the grenades from his belt and laid them on the front seat of the jeep beside the Sten gun.

Miles said to Keen, "Well, no sad songs, fellow. Let's have your hand."

His grip was firm and hard. He shook hands with Tom Coutts and climbed into the jeep. "I'll laugh like hell," he said, "if I get across to Amery before you do. So long."

He started the jeep and drove it out of the ruins and accelerated for the corner. Keen thought, for a man like that there were no words, no good-by's; all you could do was drink to his memory and remember that you had stood beside him.

The sound of the jeep receded and after it came a swelling chorus of shouts and running steps.

Keen took Mayerling by the front of his jacket. "If they ever want to hang you," he said, "I hope they'll let me pull the rope. Now turn round and follow Coutts, and don't open your mouth again till we get you across. If we do."

Coutts led them through towards the street. They were in the ruins in the middle of the block when they heard the first rattle of gunfire and then a distant, echoing crash. There were more shouts and men running. They came to the edge of the ruins and looked out. The street was empty and they ran swiftly across.

The gunfire started again and went on inter-

mittently and they heard the crump of a grenade. Two jeeps tore down the street behind them. They still had to go carefully and cross the open streets between the passage of soldiers. Once they had to retrace their steps for cover when they ran into a group of men, and further on they were almost caught when a party of troops took a short cut through the ruins.

The shooting was continuous now and rising to a new pitch of intensity. Miles was taking some with him. The sounds of the action came more and more from behind them as they approached the border. Then there were four or five dull explosions one after another and the gunfire stopped abruptly; and a few minutes later they crossed the border without challenge or hindrance, within 20 yards of their point of departure.

Amery was waiting and they thrust Mayerling into the back of his car. He drove swiftly to Augartenstrasse. They trooped up the stairs with Mayerling between Tom Coutts and Keen. Amery flung the door open for them and they marched him in. Browning and Colonel Hone came to their feet.

"There he is," said Keen, "Mayerling. Take a good look."

Hone said, "Where's Christopher Miles?"

Keen hurled Mayerling forward so that he stumbled and crashed against the table. "That's what you've got," he said, "for Christopher Miles."

Hone stared at Mayerling with a face like stone. * Keen began to shake and soon he was shivering and quaking uncontrollably from head to toe.

Amery said, "Hold on to yourself, Keen old boy. We can get Mayerling to Tempelhof in an armored car within an hour, and the R.A.F. have a plane standing by. You'll be on it. In twelve hours they'll be screaming for the Anglo-American terrorist and *saboteur* Keen. We've never heard of you of course, but we want you and Tom Coutts out of Germany by dawn."

Keen said through his teeth, "What about Anna?"

"Yes," said Amery. "Anna goes with you."

Keen said, "So there's been one flicker of decency in it. We get Anna away from Berlin—" he looked at Mayerling "—and perhaps one day when it's all forgotten we'll be able to pay you in full."

Hone's voice fell like chips of ice. "A good man in Regensburg," he said to Mayerling, "and tonight Christopher Miles. We should be able to hang you out of hand."

Mayerling leaned back against the edge of the table. "Everyone wants to hang me," he said. "But you won't. You will hoard me as your most cherished possession. I will be taken to your United States under escort and given almost any privilege I care to name. I will be treated as I should be, as a German officer and a person of high degree, because you do not know when you will need me to refute their propaganda of the Foreman journals, and while I am alive they can never use them."

He lit a cigarette from a pack on the table and blew insolent smoke.

"You can't afford to have me dead, you can't even afford to have me discontented. So I think I am about to enjoy life as never before. Of course, I am desolated about your Christopher Miles, but once I am in America I will find ways of consoling myself, starting with the skiing at Sun Valley. I'm told it's very good. Would anyone care to offer me a drink?"

Mayerling looked about from one to the other and began to laugh, and something snapped in Keen. He strode forward, took Mayerling by the throat with one hand and smashed him across the face with the other. He went on striking, back and forth with all his strength, snarling in a paroxysm of fury. He was dimly aware of Mayerling struggling in his grip and the face before him was blurred. Then Tom Coutts took control of him and pulled him away, and Mayerling slumped back against the table.

There was blood on Mayerling's face and one of his eyes was closed. But he was still laughing.

One of Browning's sergeants came in and hustled Mayerling away along the corridor.

"I'm sorry," Keen said to Browning.

"For what?" said Browning. "Better be off and get yourself changed and ready."

Keen went up the stairs to the top floor—and Anna was waiting as though she knew he would walk in at just that moment. She stood close and put a hand up to his face.

"Is it over?"

"Yes. At last."

"At last." The hand caressed his cheek. "You are thinner than when I saw you first. Twenty-six hours ago."

He said, "We're leaving in an hour."

She said, "If there is only an hour, tell me you want me to come with you."

"I want you."

"Why?"

He smiled and ruffled the top of her head. "Because I found you, and you're my Anna."

She was lovely. She was warm. She was the only thing lovely or warm in the long episode of violence and terror. Richter and Mayerling were murderers, Riefenstahl was a panderer, the old woman had sold a life for a few marks. With Zukoyan the traitor, Keipert the spy, little Berta the harlot, and those other merciless ones he had never seen, they were a monstrous gallery crowded into the two nights and a day.

He wanted her because she was warm and there had been room for love.

"Kiss me, Anna," he murmured. "Kiss the memory of it away. . . ." —By Lindsay Hardy

BLUEBOOK'S NOVEMBER CONTEST MOVIE: THE BRIDGES AT TOKO-RI

By PAUL FARON

what would YOU do?...

August Contest Winner: John McCarthy, San Diego, Calif.

. . . if you could get out of a dangerous mission by admitting you were afraid? Your brief answer to this question may win $10.

William Holden has to make that decision in *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* (Paramount). Holden, a Navy flier, almost drowns in icy waters off Korea when he ditches his plane on the way back to his carrier. But he's rescued by a helicopter piloted by Mickey Rooney.

Holden's wife *(Grace Kelly)* is stunned when Admiral Fredric March *(above left)* tells her of Holden's crash and rescue. She gets more upset when March discloses that her husband's past risks are nothing compared with the danger he'll encounter bombing the bridges at Toko-ri, vital to the Korean Communists.

After Holden has a second narrow escape from death the admiral, realizing that the pilot's courage has temporarily been shaken, gives him a chance to get out of the Toko-ri mission. Holden gets a grip on himself by going topside and letting the icy salt spray blast his face. He refuses to give up the vital assignment.

The bridges are destroyed but Holden's plane is hit by flak and starts to trail fuel. He is forced to land on a rice field. The same helicopter that rescued him before puts down nearby but Holden and Mickey Rooney *(below left)* are forced to run for a ditch as the Communists close in on them.

The Bridges at Toko-Ri gives one answer to: What would you do if you could get out of a dangerous mission by admitting you were afraid? Your own reply may win a cash prize if you write it in 25 words or less on a post-card, and mail it before November 30, 1954, to Paul Faron, BLUEBOOK, 230 Park Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. The best answer wins $10.

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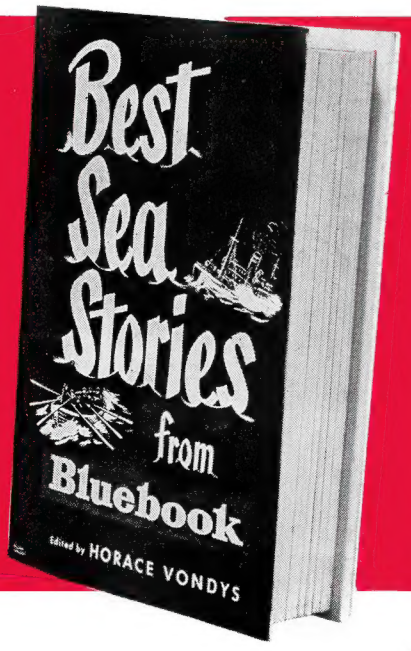

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